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# **Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru**

**Second Series**

**Volume Three**

**A Project of the  
Jawaharlal Nehru  
Memorial Fund**

  
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## FOREWORD

Jawaharlal Nehru is one of the key figures of the twentieth century. He symbolised some of the major forces which have transformed our age.

When Jawaharlal Nehru was young, history was still the privilege of the West; the rest of the world lay in deliberate darkness. The impression given was that the vast continents of Asia and Africa existed merely to sustain their masters in Europe and North America. Jawaharlal Nehru's own education in Britain could be interpreted, in a sense, as an attempt to secure for him a place within the pale. His letters of the time are evidence of his sensitivity, his interest in science and international affairs as well as of his pride in India and Asia. But his personality was veiled by his shyness and a facade of nonchalance, and perhaps outwardly there was not much to distinguish him from the ordinary run of men. Gradually there emerged the warm and universal being who became intensely involved with the problems of the poor and the oppressed in all lands. In doing so, Jawaharlal Nehru gave articulation and leadership to millions of people in his own country and in Asia and Africa.

That imperialism was a curse which should be lifted from the brows of men, that poverty was incompatible with civilisation, that nationalism should be poised on a sense of international community and that it was not sufficient to brood on these things when action was urgent and compelling—these were the principles which inspired and gave vitality to Jawaharlal Nehru's activities in the years of India's struggle for freedom and made him not only an intense nationalist but one of the leaders of humanism.

No particular ideological doctrine could claim Jawaharlal Nehru for its own. Long days in jail were spent in reading widely. He drew much from the thought of the East and West and from the philosophies of the past and the present. Never religious in the formal sense, yet he had a deep love for the culture and tradition of his own land. Never a rigid Marxist, yet he was deeply influenced by that theory and was particularly impressed by what he saw in the Soviet Union on his first visit in 1927. However, he realised that the world was too complex, and man had too many facets, to be encompassed by any single or total explanation. He himself was a socialist with an abhorrence of regimentation and a democrat who was anxious to reconcile his faith in civil liberty with the necessity of mitigating economic and social wretchedness. His struggles, both within himself

and with the outside world, to adjust such seeming contradictions are what make his life and work significant and fascinating.

As a leader of free India, Jawaharlal Nehru recognised that his country could neither stay out of the world nor divest itself of its own interests in world affairs. But to the extent that it was possible, Jawaharlal Nehru sought to speak objectively and to be a voice of sanity in the shrill phases of the 'cold war'. Whether his influence helped on certain occasions to maintain peace is for the future historian to assess. What we do know is that for a long stretch of time he commanded an international audience reaching far beyond governments, that he spoke for ordinary, sensitive, thinking men and women around the globe and that his was a constituency which extended far beyond India.

So the story of Jawaharlal Nehru is that of a man who evolved, who grew in storm and stress till he became the representative of much that was noble in his time. It is the story of a generous and gracious human being who summed up in himself the resurgence of the 'third world' as well as the humanism which transcends dogmas and is adapted to the contemporary context. His achievement, by its very nature and setting, was much greater than that of a Prime Minister. And it is with the conviction that the life of this man is of importance not only to scholars but to all, in India and elsewhere, who are interested in the valour and compassion of the human spirit that the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund has decided to publish a series of volumes consisting of all that is significant in what Jawaharlal Nehru spoke and wrote. There is, as is to be expected in the speeches and writings of a man so engrossed in affairs and gifted with expression, much that is ephemeral; this will be omitted. The official letters and memoranda will also not find place here. But it is planned to include everything else and the whole corpus should help to remind us of the quality and endeavour of one who was not only a leader of men and a lover of mankind, but a completely integrated human being.

## EDITORIAL NOTE

This volume covers the last weeks before the transfer of power, from 2 June to 15 August 1947.

On 2 June the Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, placed before the Congress and the Muslim League his plan conferring immediate Dominion Status on one or two successor authorities with a definite scheme for the partition of the country at the time of the transfer of power. There was an indication of a notional partition or provisional boundaries and the possible partition of Bengal and the Punjab. The plan also included a proposal for a referendum in the North West Frontier Province.

The Working Committee welcomed the decision of the British Government, though to Nehru, like many others, separation of a part of India from the rest was painful to contemplate. Nor did Dominion Status appear at that time as anything more than an interim arrangement. The Muslim League, stressing that partition was the only solution of India's problem, accepted the principles of the plan even while complaining that the plan fell far short of its demand.

To facilitate the process of partition, a partition committee representative of the two parties, commissions for detailed investigation of boundary questions with Cyril Radcliffe as the chairman with the decisive voice, and an arbitral tribunal to make awards in respect of the division of assets and liabilities between India and Pakistan were set up.

The Indian Independence Bill was passed on 4 July. It provided for the setting up of two new independent Dominions—India and Pakistan—after August 15, 1947. The wording of this Bill caused concern to Mahatma Gandhi, who feared that it would grant recognition to the two-nation theory; but Nehru saw in this a means of holding the old India together and enabling other ties to develop. Meanwhile, communal violence broke out in Lahore, Calcutta and some other parts of India and large-scale migrations across the proposed lines of partition followed.

Nehru had agreed to a referendum in the N.W.F.P., as in Sylhet, and urged Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Khan Sahib to abandon the idea of Pathanistan and vote for accession to India or Pakistan. But the provincial Congress decided to abstain with the result that a hairline majority was obtained in favour of Pakistan.

The Congress was also greatly concerned at this time about the Indian States. The policy of the Political Department seemed to be inspired by

the deliberate intent of fragmenting the unity of India. Nehru was prepared to thwart this even by using force if necessary; and the A.I.C.C. approved his strong line and asserted that it could not admit the right of any State in India to declare its independence and live in isolation from the rest of India. Most States acceded before 15 August to one of the two Dominions. Yet, taking advantage of the vagueness in the Indian Independence Act which appeared to give the Princes freedom to accede to either Dominion or to become independent, Hyderabad sought to secure an access to the sea, while Travancore declared that it would assume sovereignty on 15 August, nominated a representative at Delhi and appointed an agent to Pakistan.

In Kashmir Sheikh Abdullah and many of his colleagues remained in prison. So Nehru planned to go there again but Mountbatten dissuaded him. Mahatma Gandhi and Mountbatten went instead; but the Maharaja continued to evade taking a decision on accession to either India or Pakistan.

The broad outlines of free India's future policies—both internal and external—could also be discerned during these months. It was decided to appoint a planning commission to develop industry, to introduce land reforms and to Indianize the civil and defence services. In foreign relations, India emphasized her desire not to be entangled in power politics and rival blocs and to try to be friendly with all nations. She condemned Dutch aggression in Indonesia and took Indonesia's case to the Security Council.

The Nehru Memorial Library has kindly provided access to the papers of Jawaharlal Nehru and other relevant collections in its custody. Shrimati Indira Gandhi made available to us a large number of documents in her possession; these papers are referred to in the footnotes as the J.N. Collection. The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office in London has permitted reprinting of some documents published in volumes XI and XII of *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*. The India Office Library in London and the John Rylands University Library of Manchester have allowed the printing of some material in their possession. So too have the President's and Prime Minister's Secretariats, the Ministry of Law and the National Archives of India. A few items in *Sardar Patel's Correspondence*, John Connell's *Auchinleck*, Pyarelal's *Mahatma Gandhi — The Last Phase*, Vol. 2, V.P. Menon's *The Transfer of Power in India and Foreign Relations of the United States 1947* (published by the Department of State) have also been included.

*The Hindustan Times*, *Hindusthan Standard*, *The Statesman*, *The Hindu*, *National Herald* and *Anrita Bazar Patrika* have allowed us to reprint the texts of speeches and statements published by them.

Shrimati Bela Devi Nayar and Shrimati Sushila Nayar were kind enough to give us permission to consult Pyarelal's papers. Some letters from this collection, which chronologically belong to earlier volumes, have been included in the Appendix.



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# ABBREVIATIONS

A.F.R. Committee	Armed Forces Reorganisation Committee
A.I.C.C.	All India Congress Committee
B.B.C.	British Broadcasting Corporation
C.A.	Constituent Assembly
C.P.	Central Provinces
E.A.D.	External Affairs Department
E.C.A.F.E.	Economic Commission for Asia and Far East
G.H.Q.	General Headquarters
H.M.D.	Honourable Member for Defence
H.M.G.	His Majesty's Government
I.O.L.R.	India Office Library and Records
I.C.S.	Indian Civil Service
I.M.S.	Indian Medical Service
I.N.A.	Indian National Army
K.L.M.	Royal Dutch Airlines
M.L.A.	Member of Legislative Assembly
N.E. Frontier	North East Frontier
N.M.M.L.	Nehru Memorial Museum and Library
N.W.F.P.	North West Frontier Province
N.W.R.	North West Railway
P.&O.	Peninsular and Oriental Steamship Company
P.C.C.	Provincial Congress Committee
P.M.S.	Prime Minister's Secretariat
P.W.D.	Public Works Department
R.I.A.F.	Royal Indian Air Force
R.I.N.	Royal Indian Navy
T.V.A.	Tennessee Valley Authority
T.W.A.	Trans World Airlines
U.N.E.S.C.O.	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
U.P.	United Provinces
W.M.P. Department	Works, Mines and Power Department

## THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT



## 1. Status Quo on Policy Decisions<sup>1</sup>

In view of impending changes and the possibility of a reconstruction of Government in the near future,<sup>2</sup> the Cabinet does not consider it desirable for any decision to be taken, even on a Departmental level, which might injuriously affect a particular part of India. During the interim period of the next few weeks therefore, as far as possible, no such decisions should be taken which involve matters of policy, appointments and expenditure of funds. It is not intended to affect in any way the routine business of any Department or to delay decisions in regard to any matter which may be considered important. Any such urgent matters involving policy or appointments should be referred to the Cabinet, even though normally they are not considered Cabinet matters.

- 1 Note, 7 June 1947 External Affairs Department File No 1(1)-FSP/47, Appendix I, National Archives of India
- 2 The impending changes refer to the redistribution of portfolios in the Interim Government with the intent of creating two separate governments, one for India and one for Pakistan, on 19 July 1947.

## 2. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

24 June 1947

My dear Vallabhbhai,

The question of retaining or removing controls<sup>2</sup> has been repeatedly discussed. The subject is obviously of the most vital importance affecting vast numbers of persons. The present situation is decidedly unsatisfactory. At the same time there is obvious risk in taking a new step which might lead to far-reaching consequences. I should like myself to give full thought

1 J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L

2 The discussions, based on the result of the investigations carried out by a special committee to study the problem of shortage, were held in New Delhi between the Industries and Supplies Department and the Industries Committee of the Textile Control Board on the shortage of textile production in India. The Government of India would review the issue of controls in the light of those discussions

to every aspect of this question. I have plenty of material in favour of continuing controls. The latest of these papers is a note by the Commodities Prices Board which has built up a recent argument. I have been trying to get some note or essay presenting the other side of the case, that is for the discontinuance of controls. I have so far been unable to find it. Could you suggest to me where I can get this? Or perhaps you could ask someone to write it so that some of us, who are laymen, can have both aspects of the question properly stated before us. This would help me greatly in coming to a decision.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 3. Interview with Henry F. Grady<sup>1</sup>

I called on Nehru at E.A.D. today. Chief points in his remarks to me were:

1 The present government will continue in office except for those Members who are Muslim Leaguers and will resign to join Pakistan. He emphasized continuity of government in "India" and referred to Pakistan as having seceded with the approval of India because India does not wish to force it to remain.

2. His government has asked British to retain Mountbatten as Governor-General for both India and Pakistan. Nehru said there was of course no assurance Pakistan would be agreeable though he seemed not without hope.

1 US Ambassador's report to the Secretary of State, New Delhi, 27 June 1947. *Foreign Relations of the United States 1947*, Vol III, p 157 Henry F. Grady had assumed charge of the Embassy on the evening of 25 June

Henry Francis Grady (1882-1957); US trade commissioner to Britain and Europe to report on postwar financial conditions, 1919-20; Vice-Chairman, US Tariff Commission, 1937-39, Assistant Secretary of State, August 1939-January 1941, head of the American Technical Mission to India, March 1942, American Ambassador to India, 1947-48, to Greece, 1948-50, and to Iran, 1950

3. Nehru said he hoped India would receive expert assistance from U.S.A. but was not specific regarding projects. He stated government has a number of projects which he will later take up with me. He feels and I agree that little can be done for six weeks or two months.

4. Only comment regarding Mrs Pandit was that her mission was a "difficult one".<sup>2</sup>

5. Nehru was very cordial throughout conversation.

2. Vijayalakshmi Pandit had been appointed Indian Ambassador to the Soviet Union

#### 4. To C. Rajagopalachari<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
28 June 1947

My dear Rajaji,

Thank you for your letter of the 28th June sending me a note<sup>2</sup> on cloth and yarn control I have read this note carefully I am afraid I do not find it very convincing. The question is too intricate a one for me to venture a final opinion But the impression I get from the note is that it represents rather the industrialists' viewpoint With decontrol of cloth, prices will certainly rise to begin with and very probably there will be extreme scarcity in some areas We may have demonstrations by semi-naked men and women from the villages. Labour will become restive, even more than at present, when it cannot get cloth at the present prices There will be an impression that all this has been done for the benefit of the industrialists, more especially as no attempt is made to control profits Demands for an increase in wages will follow.

2. These are some obvious reactions which may or may not have much force. I have little doubt, however, that while on the one side there will be appreciation of the removal of control, on the other there will be very strong criticism.

1. File No. 26(46)/48-PMS

2 Not available

3. It is true that textile control orders were not designed as an integral part of a policy of planned economic reconstruction. Nevertheless controls are an essential part of planned economy. Probably we shall have to consider this planning business fairly soon, and if the organization<sup>3</sup> has ceased to exist, it will take some time to reproduce it

4. I should have thought that the most important aspect of this problem is how to increase production. There is practically nothing about this in the scheme. All that is said is that the present control is on the whole hampering rather than assisting larger production. It is difficult to understand why this should be so I think it is possible to increase production provided we can produce the right atmosphere for it and get the workers to realise the necessity for it I think also that production will increase by greater standardisation and by discouragement of finer counts. Something of this kind is mentioned in the note; but it does not go very far

5 There is reference in the note to the immediate prospect of imports of one hundred million yards from the U.K and the U.S.A. and an assured monthly supply from Japan This makes rather painful reading Perhaps this is necessary, but it does go right against all our policy of the past many years

6 I do not understand also why we should not insist on a greater production of yarn for handlooms.

7. As I have said above, I am very inexpert at this business; but I have a definite apprehension lest we might jump from the frying pan into the fire Anyway the subject is far too important for us to deal with it casually The first thing to be done is to have full discussion amongst ourselves at an informal meeting of the Cabinet Members

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

3 A temporary planning board had been set up in October 1946 by the Interim Government

5. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
2 July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Thank you for your letter of the 29th June about Governors for provinces.<sup>2</sup> We shall be glad if Sir John Colville and General Nye<sup>3</sup> stay on as Governors after the 15th August. Sir Chandulal Trivedi<sup>4</sup> and Sir Akbar Hydari<sup>5</sup> will, of course, stay on though it might be considered desirable to transfer them or one of them to another province

The question will then arise of finding Governors for the remaining provinces. These will include West Bengal and East Punjab.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, p 831

2. In his letter of 29 June Mountbatten asked Nehru to let him know whether the Congress party intended that new Governors should be appointed as from the 15th August in UP, Bihar, CP, Orissa, Assam, Bombay and Madras. If it was not possible to recommend the names for these posts immediately, it was important that the existing Governors should be put in a position for the time being to make their own plans

3. Sir Archibald Edward Nye (1895-1967); joined Army 1914; Commander, Nowshera Brigade, 1939, Director of Staff Duties, 1940, Vice-Chief of Imperial General Staff, 1941-46, Governor of Madras, 1946-48, High Commissioner for the U.K. in India, 1948-52, High Commissioner for the U.K. in Canada, 1952-56

4. C M Trivedi (1893-1980); ICS, Chief Secretary to Government, CP, 1937-42, Secretary, Government of India, War Department, 1942-46; Governor of Orissa, 1946-47, East Punjab, 1947-53, Andhra State, 1953-56 and Andhra Pradesh, 1956-57, Member, Planning Commission, 1957-63

5. Muhammad Saleh Akbar Hydari (1894-1948), ICS; Secretary, Industries and Supplies, Government of India, 1943-45, Member for Information and Broadcasting, Viceroy's Executive Council, 1945-46, Governor of Assam, 1947-48

## 6. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

July 4, 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

In accordance with your suggestion, made at this morning's meeting of the Cabinet,<sup>2</sup> I am offering my resignation from membership of the Interim Government.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 File No 1446/36/GG/43, p 2, President's Secretariat.

2 Mountbatten's recommendation that the Government at the Centre be re-constituted on lines similar to that of the Government of Bengal, with the Muslim League Members forming the 'shadow Cabinet' responsible only for the Pakistan areas, was turned down as illegal by Jinnah. It was subsequently decided not to ask the Muslim League Members to resign but to withdraw the portfolios and reallocate them to two separate Cabinets under the common Chairmanship of the Governor-General Mountbatten accordingly called for the resignation of the entire Cabinet

If you agree with this proposal I trust you will appoint some committee and ask it to report within two or three weeks.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

## 8. To Ahmad Nawaz Khan<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
7th July 1947

My dear Nawab Sahib,<sup>2</sup>

Thank you for your letter of the 27th June.<sup>3</sup> It is always a pleasure to hear from you.

Much has happened during the past few months which has been very painful. But I hope that we shall pull through.

I shall be very glad to meet you when you come to Delhi.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 File No. 201-PS/46-PMS.

2 Nawab of Dera Ismail Khan; M.L.A (Central) since 1931; hereditary premier peer of North West Frontier Province; served First World War, 1914-15, Third Afghan War, 1919 and Waziristan, 1919-21.

3. Nawaz Khan wrote that he had been keenly watching Nehru's official actions and activities and considered them "quite right and proper under the present circumstances in India and in the world."

## 9. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
7 July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Thank you for your letter of the 4th July regarding the question of the

1 J.N. Collection

pay and allowances of Governors<sup>2</sup> Our general approach to the problem of pay in the Services and elsewhere is that it should not go beyond a certain limit which is likely to be considerably below the present limits This pay, however, should be augmented by allowances wherever necessary.

2. Applying this principle to the two new provinces of East Punjab and West Bengal, we suggest that the pay of the Governors should be in the lowest grade, that is Rs. 66,000/— per annum The question of allowances can be considered later and suitable sums fixed having regard to the special circumstances in each case.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

- 2 Mountbatten had written to Nehru on 4 July "Presumably the Governor of West Bengal will be paid considerably less than the present Governor, he might go down to the same grade as the Governor of Bihar or even the CP, but he would also need rather more than half the allowances which are provided in the Governors' allowances and privileges order, 1936"

## 10. The Reconstitution of the Interim Government<sup>1</sup>

I have now received resignations from the nine Congress Members. The five Muslim League Members have for the present refrained from handing in theirs, and Liaquat has written asking for details of my plan of reconstitution because the Muslim League can only decide whether to send in their resignations, when they know the full proposals . . .

3 Meanwhile I saw Nehru this morning, who agreed that I need take no steps to reconstitute the Government until the normal Cabinet meeting on 23rd July, but he said he could not possibly afford to allow it to be held beyond this .

- 1 Discussions with Mountbatten, 8 July 1947 Extracts The first two paragraphs are in Mountbatten's cable to Ismay dated 8 July 1947 and the last paragraph is in the Minutes of Viceroy's Fifty-Fourth Staff Meeting held on the same day printed in *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 12 at p. 8 and p 13 respectively



Mountbatten said that he had explained to Pandit Nehru the difficulty that, if he expelled the Muslim League Members of the Interim Government, it would appear that his first act, after the announcement that he was going to stay on as Governor-General of the Dominion of India alone, was taking sides. Pandit Nehru had insisted that the reconstitution, as planned, was in the best interests of Pakistan. He had also explained the reason why Congress were so keen that this reconstitution should take place before the end of July. Congress had originally acceded to the Muslim League request to join the Interim Government on the condition that the latter should join the existing Constituent Assembly. The failure of the League to join the Assembly had so much prejudiced the reputations of the Congress leaders that Pandit Nehru felt that they would stand little chance of being returned in fresh elections. In fact, their candidates had been soundly defeated in a recent bye-election.

## 11. The Governor-Generalship of India<sup>1</sup>

Mountbatten stated that he had that morning shown Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel the draft statement which the Prime Minister intended to make.<sup>2</sup> They could not have been more charming, and had made no criticism—in fact they had thought it admirable. He had told them that he considered that he was under an obligation to them to stay on and had only asked them to facilitate making clear the fact of his impartiality. They had replied that no one would imagine that he was being partial. They had further agreed to reference, in the Prime Minister's speech, to the Muslim League's approval of his appointment.

1. Extracts from the Minutes of Viceroy's Fifty-fifth Staff Meeting held on 9 July 1947, *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 12, pp. 35-38.
2. On 8 July 1947, Ailes sent a draft of a statement to Mountbatten on the nominations of Governors-General for India and Pakistan which he (Ailes) intended to make the following day in the House of Commons.

The Viceroy stated that the Congress leaders had said that they wanted him to stay on as long as he would, but he had insisted on retention of the formula "at all events for the transition period" because this meant that it would be possible to select, nearer the time, the date on which it would be possible to depart with honour. They had accepted this formula.

The Viceroy said that at his interview, just before the present meeting, with Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel, they had asked him what he was going to do to help India in connection with her most pressing difficulty—relations with the States. He had replied that he had already started to help in this matter and would now make the cause of agreement his primary consideration. He had said that he wished to pay tribute to Pandit Nehru for having agreed that States need only join the Centre on the three main central subjects; and to Sardar Patel for the statement which the latter had issued three days previously.<sup>3</sup> He had said that, if the task could be tackled on that basis, he would throw himself heart and soul into the cause of obtaining agreement. He had made the point that, in meetings with representatives of the States, it would be desirable for him to see the States' representatives alone first, accompanied only by his own staff. He would then have discussions with the States Department, and if necessary also Pandit Nehru, unilaterally. He would then hold further meetings with each side to narrow down the points of disagreement; and it was only when he was confident that agreement would be reached that he would bring the parties together. Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel had agreed to his proposal.

The Viceroy said that he had received a letter from Sardar Nishtar and a verbal complaint from Mr Jinnah to the effect that the former was not being associated, as had been intended, with the work of the States Department. He had pointed out to Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel that they had agreed that some States would have to go to Pakistan; and they had now agreed to his suggestion that Sardar Nishtar should have access to the Secretary of the States Department. He would therefore reply to Sardar Nishtar to this effect and add the point that the Deputy Secretary of the States Department was a Muslim officer.

3 In the statement issued on 5 July, Vallabhbhai Patel announced the creation of a new department to conduct their relations with the States in matters of common concern and proposed to explore "the possibility of associating with the administration of the new Department a standing committee representative of both the States and British India." He also appealed to the States to join the Constituent Assembly and its councils for the common good of all

## 12. Issues to be Clarified by the Working Committee<sup>1</sup>

In view of the meeting of the Congress Working Committee on Saturday next,<sup>2</sup> I am putting down below some of the important and urgent points that need decision in the near future. I do not mean that the Working Committee has necessarily to decide all these points but that it should know the kind of problems we have to face. The Committee should give us directions as to how we should tackle these problems and, wherever necessary, should issue directions to the public.

2. A basic problem is the general relationship of the Working Committee to the new Government of India. This problem has been with us in some measure during the last ten months. From August 15th onwards, in view of the new status of the Government, the question becomes an even more urgent one. The Government will have to take quick decisions in a large number of matters of vital importance. Some of these matters are such that they cannot be easily discussed in the Working Committee or elsewhere. The data and papers relating to them are secret and any premature disclosure might have unfortunate consequences. These relate to financial, economic and defence matters as well as others. Apart from this, quick decisions have to be taken from day to day and it is hardly possible to refer any matter involving such a decision to the Working Committee.

3. This involves the general question of freedom of the Government to shape policies and act up to them within the larger ambit of the general policy laid down in Congress resolutions. The Government, though predominantly a Congress Government and therefore subject to general Congress policy, will not be entirely a Government of Congressmen.

4. As the Viceroy fades out of the picture, the whole burden of initiating policies and giving effect to them falls on the Cabinet. The Prime Minister plays an important part in giving a general direction to this

1. New Delhi, 15 July 1947. A.I.C.C. Files G-30/1946-48, pp 361-371, and 71/1946-47, pp 7-15, N.M.M.L. This note was sent to the Congress President J.B. Kripalani, with copies to Mahatma Gandhi, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad and Rajagopalachari.

2. The Congress Working Committee met in New Delhi on 19 July 1947. Among the subjects it discussed were the choice of Governors, plans for celebration of 15 August and the date for the transfer of power.

policy and in coordinating the various activities of the Government. Owing to various factors little has been done during the past few months in evolving our general economic policy. Our minds have been far too much taken up by political developments and communal conflict. While these will continue to take up our time, it will be necessary to direct attention to the really vital problems that confront the country. We shall have to lay down our policy towards industry, to planning generally, to workers' standards, to controls and to rapid development and increasing production. Production is indeed the vital keystone on which much else depends. India is facing an exceedingly difficult food situation and partly as a consequence of this our financial position is bad.<sup>3</sup> We have to import food and pay for it in foreign currency. We lack this currency and the only way to get it is by exporting our own goods or by raising loans abroad. We have not got much to export and borrowing money abroad is not a safe undertaking from many points of view. Yet we may be compelled to do this, for we can hardly allow our own people to starve for lack of food. Our various schemes of development also necessitate the purchase of machinery and equipment from abroad. This too means foreign currency.

5. Our normal expenditure, both for civil and military purpose, is likely to go up proportionately because of the partition. Partition also delays development schemes though, no doubt, we should try to push these through as rapidly as possible. Production being the first priority, both in regard to food and other necessary commodities, we have to think about it and organise it in a planned and scientific way. Merely appealing to people, whether industrialists or others, is not good enough. The cooperation of industrialists is very necessary; but equally necessary is the cooperation of labour generally. Only a satisfied labour force can work hard and with efficiency. This is not so much a question of paying more and more wages and salaries but rather one of psychological approach and of producing a feeling that everyone is having a square deal. Our resources are obviously limited and we cannot increase wages and salaries beyond a certain limit. But we can act so as to produce a certain faith in the *bona fides* of Government and their desire to give a fair deal to everyone. When so many things are in short supply, it is difficult to leave matters to chance or to what is called "free enterprise." A Government has to look ahead and provide for the possible risks and dangers.

3 The southern and eastern areas of India were threatened by famine while the failure of rains in the Punjab, Rajputana, Gujarat and Kathiawar aggravated the food problem.

6. This is just a brief indication of some of the urgent problems that confront us. Progress in one direction is blocked because of a bottleneck in some other aspect of national economy. Production is held up because of lack of coal or of transport. Coal and transport have indeed become the most important bases for all our schemes of production and development. The lack of iron and steel comes in the way of these development schemes. Faulty distribution results in essential public buildings like hospitals not being built for lack of steel when cinema houses are growing up in large numbers.

7. How are these and other problems to be tackled? Naturally it will be the business of Government to tackle them. Where does the Working Committee come into the picture? It is desirable to be clear on this point in order to avoid future misunderstanding.

8. The immediate issues that arise are.—

- (1) The constitution of the new Government of India. Who is to be Prime Minister? Will the Prime Minister appoint his Cabinet, naturally in consultation with his colleagues, or will this Cabinet be appointed largely or partially by the Working Committee?
- (2) The appointment of Governors of provinces. The present position is that four of the existing Governors have been asked to stay on. This question was put by the Viceroy to some of the Congress members of Government and the answer they gave was that Trivedi of Orissa, Hydari of Assam, Colville of Bombay, and Nye of Madras might stay on for the present. The other Governors must leave by the 15th August. This means that we have to provide Governors for the U.P., Bihar, C.P., West Bengal and East Punjab. In all we have to find five Governors. It is possible, of course, for either Trivedi or Hydari to be transferred to another province. The number required remains the same. There is no particular point in transferring Hydari from Assam. He has only been there for a short time. It is clear that in appointing a Governor to a particular province, the Prime Minister of that province should be consulted before the final appointment is made. While the power of Governors will be strictly limited after August 15th, their responsibilities will still be great especially in this period of transition. Strong and able Governors will particularly be needed in West Bengal and East Punjab where new Provincial Governments will come into being and the situation is likely to be difficult.

9. All appointments of Englishmen in any particular office may be deemed to end by the 31st March 1948 unless the Government of India, for some special reason, desires to extend the period by a few months

10 The question of appointing Ambassadors and Ministers to foreign countries is continually with us, though there is no immediate urgency about it. It is desirable, however, to make an early appointment of an Ambassador in Nepal A *Charge d'affaires* in the Paris Embassy should also be appointed soon In view of various developments, it appears highly desirable to take early steps to exchange diplomatic representatives with Egypt, Iran and Afghanistan Some steps to this end are being taken But the procedure will take time.

An appointment which may be considered to be fairly urgent is that of a High Commissioner for Pakistan.

11. The whole present structure of Government, its Departments and portfolios, have to be reviewed and possibly changed or varied. It may be necessary to open new Departments, such as that of Planning and Economic Development My purpose in drawing attention to all these matters that will have to be decided soon is to inform you of the nature of the problems that face us It is hardly possible for the Working Committee to consider them in any detail or to give us direction in regard to all of them The point is that the Committee should realise what the Government will be faced with and should lay down a general policy as to how it should function with or without reference to it. A continual reference is, of course, impossible Normally a party executive lays down the broadest lines of policy and leaves it to the Government to work it out.

12. Then there are other problems such as the observance of August 15th What should be done on that day and what should not be done? There is the official aspect of it as to what formal ceremonial should be followed It has been proposed that the Governor-General should on that day come down to the Constituent Assembly and have the Proclamation read out; also perhaps to make a speech which might be followed by some other speeches from the House, more or less on the lines of British Parliamentary procedure

13. What else should be done especially by the public? Some clear directions have to be issued as questions are asked. Many people are of opinion that this is not the time for celebration when people's hearts are heavy and distressed at recent happenings On the other hand it would

be exceedingly odd and perhaps harmful if the day was passed without some public ceremonies. Perhaps the least that can be done is to ask for national flags to be put up and for a public meeting or demonstration to be held in the afternoon when some resolution can be passed or a previously drafted statement can be read out.

14. The question of the flag has to be considered. A Committee of the Constituent Assembly has recommended a flag which is a slight variation of the existing flag. It has our three colours; but instead of the full *charkha*, it has only a wheel in the centre of the white strip. If the Working Committee approves of this, it should formally be adopted. The question has arisen also as to whether the Union Jack should appear on the corner of the flag as a symbol of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

15. Another matter which has to be thought of is the formal adoption of a national anthem.

16. This note is not meant for circulation among members of the Working Committee but to indicate to the Congress President and a few of his colleagues the nature of the problems we have to face and discuss when the Working Committee meets.

Jawaharlal Nehru

### 13. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

19th July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

In view of the reconstruction of the Government that has taken place,<sup>2</sup> I have consulted my colleagues and we are of opinion that at present

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 12, pp 260-261
2. Consequent on the passing of the Indian Independence Act, 1947, providing for the setting up in India of two independent dominions, India and Pakistan, the Viceroy, after accepting the resignations of the Members of the Interim Government, reconstituted, on 19 July 1947, two Provisional Governments with corresponding Departments for India and Pakistan. They were to hold separate meetings of the Cabinet in respect of matters concerning exclusively India or Pakistan, but there was to be joint consultation on matters of common interest under the chairmanship of the Governor-General.

only provisional arrangements should be made. We shall undoubtedly have to add to the number of Members of the Government, but we do not wish to do so immediately. We may be able to suggest names of additional Members in the near future. Meanwhile, all arrangements are strictly provisional and subject to change

We propose that the following existing Members of the Cabinet should continue:

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel,  
Maulana Abul Kalam Azad,  
Dr. Rajendra Prasad,  
Dr. John Matthai,  
Shri Rajagopalachari,  
Sardar Baldev Singh,  
Mr. Jagjivan Ram,  
Mr. C.H. Bhabha and  
Jawaharlal Nehru.

These existing Members will continue to hold their present portfolios and will, in addition, take charge of the five portfolios and Departments vacated by the Muslim League nominees. This will be done in the following manner:

Finance :	Mr. C. Rajagopalachari
Communications :	Dr. John Matthai
Commerce :	Mr. Bhabha
Health :	Mr. Jagjivan Ram
Law :	Jawaharlal Nehru

As Mr. Jagjivan Ram has not returned yet and it is not quite clear how soon he will be able to take charge because of his injury,<sup>3</sup> I am prepared to take temporary charge of the Health Department, till Mr. Jagjivan Ram can do so, or till some other arrangement is made.

These arrangements, I would repeat, are provisional only and subject to change in future

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

<sup>3</sup> Jagjivan Ram, Labour Member in the Interim Government, was injured on 17 July 1947 when a York aircraft in which he was travelling to India from Britain crashed in the desert near Basra



**14. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
19th July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Thank you for your letter of the 14th July regarding your staff.<sup>2</sup> I am sorry for the delay in replying to it. May I reply to it a little later? But, meanwhile, I might say that we agree entirely with your suggestions in regard to the reduction of members of your staff. It is for you to determine whom you should keep to assist you in your work.

As regards Viceroy's House and Viceregal Lodge, Simla, we appreciate greatly your suggestion that these might be put to some other national use and that you might move into a smaller house. I have no doubt that in future we should have to use these enormous houses for some other purpose. How far any change is feasible in the present, I am not quite clear.

I hope to write to you further in answer to your letter.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 JN Collection

2 In his letter of 14 July 1947 Mountbatten had recommended certain names for the posts of a Flag Officer, an Air Officer Commanding, the Chief of Staff and the Commander-in-Chief.

**15. To the Secretary, Health Department<sup>1</sup>**

In view of political developments and the passing of the Indian Independence Act, a large number of changes are taking place in all Departments in regard to the staff. A number of British officers are retiring and a number of other officers have opted in favour of Pakistan and will be going there soon. Those who are going to the Pakistan area have already been asked to hand over charge to others and to function

1 Note, 20 July 1947. JN Papers, N M M L

separately in temporary Pakistan Departments in Delhi. The I.M.S. will cease to exist as a Service.

2. All this involves considerable changes and fresh appointments. I should like to know immediately the names of the officers who are leaving the Health Department in the near future for any one of the reasons mentioned above or for any other reason. I should like to know if there are any proposals for new appointments.

3. It has been decided in Cabinet that it is not necessary to fill every vacancy unless there is special reason to do so. This decision has been taken partly because of the paucity of officers available and partly for reasons of economy. It may be necessary to reduce the number of senior officers if it is thought that such reduction is desirable in public interest. Will Secretary, therefore, kindly send me full information on the subject?

4. I should also like to have some information about the hospitals in Delhi—who is in charge of them, does the senior staff include any honorary surgeons or physicians who are allowed private practice as is the practice in England?

5. Is the Safdarjung Hospital functioning and if so who is in charge of it?

6. I have been informed that there has been a considerable loss of medical stores from the Delhi hospitals, more especially from the Safdarjung Hospital. This Hospital, which originally belonged to the Americans, was fully equipped with drugs, medicines, instruments, refrigerators, ambulances, jeeps etc. Is all this equipment still there? I presume that there is some record of what was received from the Americans and this can be referred to. Both in the Safdarjung Hospital and in other hospitals an inquiry should be made about the equipment and medical stores which should be there according to records and which are actually there now.

7. I understand that there is a proposal for the enlargement of the Willingdon Nursing Home. Is anything being done about this? There is obviously need for such enlargement.

8. I should be grateful for early information on these points, more especially in regard to those officers who are leaving and the fresh appointments which have to be made. These appointments have to take effect by the 15th August.

**16. To the Prime Ministers of Provinces<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
21st July 1947

My dear Prime Minister,

In view of the political developments and the new set-up of the Government of India, it is obviously necessary that close contact should be maintained between the Government of India and the provincial Ministries. I know that it is your desire and I entirely agree with it. We shall do all in our power not only to keep you generally informed of developments but to refer specific matters to you for your information and advice. I suggest that generally weekly letters might be exchanged between us giving some account of the week's important happenings. I shall endeavour to send such a weekly letter to you and I hope that you will be good enough to send me a weekly letter also.

We shall, of course, be in communication with the Governors but what I am suggesting is something in addition to that, so that we can have direct touch with the Ministries

Apart from the weekly letters, we shall communicate with you by telegram, whenever necessity arises and I hope that you will do the same. Such telegraphs may be marked 'personal' when you consider that necessary and want to draw personal attention to any particular matter. Such telegrams will normally be in cypher.

The External Affairs Department have started issuing a monthly summary of international events. This will be sent to our Ambassadors abroad as well as to the Departments of the Government of India. I propose to send these summaries to you also, as well as to the Governor of your province.

I shall gladly welcome any suggestion from you which will facilitate closer contact between your Government and the Government of India. You will appreciate that we are passing through a difficult and critical period and the closest cooperation between us is necessary. I can assure you that you will have that cooperation at our end.

A copy of the latest foreign summary issued by my Department is being sent to you

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

**17. To O.P. Ramaswami Reddiar<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
25 July 1947

My dear Prime Minister,<sup>2</sup>

Some time ago I wrote to Subbaroyan and suggested to him that in view of political developments it was desirable to consider the question of releasing political and labour prisoners, including Communists. Naturally it was not for me to judge as to what should be done, and the discretion must rest with your Cabinet. But I suggested that the time had come when this matter should be considered in view of new developments and wherever possible prisoners should be released. As a matter of fact many thousands of ordinary prisoners are being released on August 15th. It would be odd if the semi-political prisoners were not released about the same time.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Papers, N M M.L.

2. Omandur P. Ramaswami Reddiar (1895-1970), Congressman from Tamil Nadu; President of the Tamilnad Congress Committee, 1938, elected Member of the Madras Legislative Council in 1946 and served as Premier of the composite Madras State, 1947-49

**18. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
27 July 1947

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I have just been to Bapu. He felt that K M Munshi was wholly unsuited for Bengal. Indeed, he felt he was even more unsuited for Bengal than for East Punjab. He based his conclusion on his intimate knowledge of Bengal and the Bengalis.

The only name he could suggest was Amrit Kaur's.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol 4, pp 548-549

**19. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
27 July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I wrote to you yesterday about certain remarks made by the Commander-in-Chief about the Financial Adviser to the Defence Department. You spoke to me about this matter later.

2. I now find in the minutes of the 716th meeting of the Commander-in-Chief's Committee of 25th July 1947 that Mr. Dundas<sup>2</sup> is said to be functioning as the Secretary of the Defence Department (also representing Pakistan) and Mr. Shenoy<sup>3</sup> as Joint Secretary (also representing the Dominion of India).

3. In the first item in the minutes it is stated that Mr. Bhalja<sup>4</sup> has been described as Additional Secretary. Mr. Bhalja has asked to be described as Secretary of the Defence Department of India. To this the Commander-in-Chief did not agree. He said as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, he dealt with India as a whole and as long as there was a Government of India, he expected that there would be a Defence Department capable of representing the whole of India

4. There are subsequent references also to the Secretary, Defence Department, namely Mr. Dundas, who is asked to take action in regard to particular matters.

5. It is clear that the Commander-in-Chief is completely wrong and that Mr. Bhalja was right. Indeed the Commander-in-Chief has not appreciated at all what has happened in India recently.

According to orders passed by you, Mr Bhalja is the Secretary of the Defence Department (India). Mr. Dundas has no business to function as such.

- 1 File No R/3/1/169, I.O.L.R., London. Also available in JN Collection
- 2 A.D.F. Dundas (1899-1973); member of the Indian Political Service, served in N.W.F.P.; Secretary, Defence Department, Government of India, 1946-47, Agent to Governor-General in Baluchistan, 1947-48, Governor, North West Frontier Province, 1948-49
- 3 J.P.L. Shenoy, joined the ICS 1930, served in Madras Province till March 1947 and later became Joint Secretary, Defence
- 4 G.S. Bhalja (1895-1948), joined ICS 1920, Financial Secretary and Secretary, P.W.D., 1939-44, Additional Secretary, War Department, Government of India, 1944-46; Secretary, Defence Department, 1946-47; Secretary, Department of Information and Broadcasting, 1947-48.

6. This is not merely a matter of designation but of outlook, and I fear that if the outlook is as represented in these minutes, then the interests of India will suffer. Mr. Bhalja, as representing the Defence Department (India), must look after the interests of India, just as Mr. Dundas presumably looks after the interests of Pakistan.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 20. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
28th July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I am exceedingly sorry for the delay in suggesting names for the Governorships. As I wrote to you the delay has been caused by the absence of some persons concerned from Delhi. We had in addition to consult the Prime Ministers of the provinces. Even now I am not sending you a full list as one of our prospective choices is in America. We are in communication with him.

The situation in East Punjab requires careful and firm handling. We have come to the conclusion that it would be desirable to transfer Sir Chandulal Trivedi from Orissa to East Punjab. I have communicated on this subject with Trivedi and the Prime Minister, Mahtab, and also obtained their consent to the proposal. This would create a vacancy in Orissa.

We suggest the following names:

For East Punjab: Sir Chandulal Trivedi

For Bihar: Mr. Jairamdas Doulatram

For Central Provinces: Mr. Mangaldas Pakvasa<sup>2</sup> (at present President, Bombay Council)

For Orissa: Dr. Kailas Nath Katju (at present Minister, U.P. Government)

Thus U.P. and West Bengal remain I hope to let you know about them soon. I might mention that we propose to appoint Dr. B.C. Roy

<sup>1</sup> J.N. Papers, N M M L

<sup>2</sup> Mangaldas Manchharam Pakvasa (1882-1968), President, Bombay Legislative Council, 1937-47; Governor of Madhya Pradesh, 1947-52, acting Governor, Bombay, 1954-55; acted as Governor of Mysore, 1959 and 1960-61.

as a Governor. He is at present in America under some treatment and is not likely to come back before the second week of September. In case of his appointment, some temporary arrangements for three or four weeks might be necessary.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 21. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
28th July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

In continuation of my letter to you of today's date about Governors, I have to add the following suggestions for U.P. and West Bengal.

For the United  
Provinces  
For West Bengal

Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy of  
Calcutta  
Sir Gopalaswami Ayyangar

Dr. B.C. Roy, as I have written to you, is in America at present and is not likely to be back till some time in September. We may thus have to make some temporary arrangements for three or four weeks. We are consulting the U.P. Prime Minister about these arrangements.

Sir Gopalaswami Ayyangar has rather reluctantly agreed to our request. Probably, he may not like to stay as Governor for long, but we hope that he will, in any event, function as such for three or four months, or possibly more. I hope to hear from him more definitely by this evening and shall let you know.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

Sir Gopalaswamy Ayyangar's name should only be finalised after I have finally heard from him this evening.

Jawaharlal Nehru

## 22. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
29 July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I am writing to you again about the Governors. Yesterday I sent you the names for most of the provinces West Bengal was left out I am glad to inform you that Mr. C. Rajagopalachari has agreed to go to West Bengal.

2. The full list of names, therefore, is as follows:

For West Bengal	:	Mr. C. Rajagopalachari
For Bihar	:	Mr. Jairamdas Doulatram
For Central Provinces	:	Mr. Mangaldas Pakvasa (at present President, Bombay Council)
For East Punjab	:	Sir Chandulal Trivedi (to be transferred from Orissa)
For Orissa	:	Dr. Kailas Nath Katju (at present Minister, U P. Government)
For United Provinces	:	Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy (of Calcutta)

3. I have informed all these persons named above and they have accepted I have also informed the Prime Ministers of the provinces concerned and obtained their approval All of them except one will take charge about the 15th August. I do not know what date will be suitable for this—the 15th or the 14th

4. The one exception is Dr. B.C. Roy who is in America at present and who expects to return about the middle of September. It will be necessary to appoint someone in his absence, that is for about a month. I shall inform you of our suggestion for this interim appointment soon

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J N. Papers, N M M L.



**23. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>**

30 July 1947

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I have spoken to Ambedkar and he has agreed.<sup>2</sup> He said Law would not give him enough work I told him he need not worry about that. There will be plenty of work of many kinds to do.

I have also spoken to Rafi and he has agreed.

Now you have to approach Syama Prasad and Rajaji and Shanmukham.

I have still to speak to N V. and Amrit Kaur.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

1 *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol 4, p 536.

2 Ambedkar was appointed Law Member in Nehru's cabinet.

**24. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
31 July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

You will remember that I included Dr B C. Roy's name in the list of Governors. He is to take charge in the United Provinces But he is unable to do so before the 15th of September We have thus to make arrangements for this interim period of one month from the 15th August to the 15th September. We have invited Mrs. Sarojini Naidu to undertake this office for this month and I am glad to say that she has agreed to do so

I am being asked by our prospective Governors as to when and how they are to take charge. Could you kindly let me have some indication of the exact date and when they are supposed to reach provincial capitals?

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 J N Collection.

## 25. To Syed Ali Zaheer<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
1 August 1947

My dear Ali Zaheer,<sup>2</sup>

I received your letter.<sup>3</sup> I am very sorry that I could not meet you during your stay in Delhi for the Minorities Committee. I had hoped to meet you, but somehow this did not come off.

I am exceedingly sorry that you should feel that we have at all forgotten you or that we have any grievance against you. Both these surmises are entirely incorrect. During your period of Membership of the Cabinet, all of us came into fairly close touch with each other and I know for a fact that all your colleagues greatly appreciated your work and the spirit of cooperation which you showed us. Certainly I felt very grateful to you as I wrote to you at that time.

Circumstances were, however, too powerful for us and we had to part. Since then we have lived in a kind of whirl with event following event and there has been no opportunity to offer you scope for work at the Centre.

During these recent days, when I have had to face again the question of forming a Cabinet, I have often thought of you and wished that I could ask you to join us. But you will appreciate that one has to consider all manner of aspects and the result is not exactly as one might wish. I am sorry that I am unable to invite you to join the present Cabinet. But believe me when I say that this has absolutely nothing to do with any lack of appreciation of your qualities and merits.

I hope that before long it may be possible for me to suggest a post abroad as representative of India. This partition business has delayed all our work. But we hope to expedite it in the near future.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 J N Papers, N M M L.

2 (1896-1983), Member, U P Legislative Council, 1930-37 and again from 1939 till supersession of the Legislature; elected President, All India Shia Political Conference, 1941 and 1945, Member for Law and Communications in the Interim Government, September to October 1946, Ambassador to Iran, 1947-51 and concurrently to Iraq, 1949-51, Minister in U P 1951-67.

3 Syed Ali Zaheer had written on 29 July that he felt greatly humiliated when asked to resign from the Interim Government to make way for the Muslim League. He wrote that the slur could be removed only by giving him some suitable post though he was making a suitable living at the Bar.

**26. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
1 August 1947

My dear Vallabhbhai,

As formalities have to be observed to some extent, I am writing to invite you to join the new Cabinet. This writing is somewhat superfluous because you are the strongest pillar of the Cabinet.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

1. J.N Papers, N M.M.L

**27. Circular to Governors Designate<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
1st August 1947

I am writing to inform you that you will probably be expected to reach your provincial capital on the 14th August. Early on the 15th August the swearing-in ceremony will take place and you will take formal charge of the Governorship

The salaries and allowances of Governors have varied. there are three or four grades. In the existing circumstances it will not be proper for us to continue the old salaries and allowances which are very extravagant and which are meant for the upkeep of big staffs, and sometimes bands and orchestras

The Governor's work will be simpler and less exacting than previously; that is to say, he will function as a constitutional head and will not interfere with ministerial decisions. Because of all this the Governor's staff need not be as big as previously, though, of course, he must maintain his position with dignity and must have an adequate staff.

We propose to fix the Governor's salaries for the present at the figure for the lowest grade, that is, Rs. 66,000 per annum This will be for all Governors, excepting those whose terms are continuing and who are likely to leave a few months later.

1 J N Papers, N M M L It was sent to Sarojini Naidu, Jairamdas Doulatram, Kailas Nath Katju, C Rajagopalachari and Mangaldas Palkhva

We are not fixing allowances at present, but it is clear that the old allowances will have to be much reduced. I suggest that soon after taking charge you might consider the question of your staff and the sumptuary allowances needed and yourself suggest to us what figure you consider reasonable.

I have no doubt that many other questions will arise after your taking charge. I hope you will not hesitate to write to me and we shall gladly help you to the best of our ability.

Jawaharlal Nehru

**28. To Jagjivan Ram<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
1st August 1947

My dear Jagjivan Ram,

I am writing to invite you to join the new Cabinet. This is just a semi-formal letter. I know, of course, that we are going to have your co-operation in the Cabinet

I suppose that for some little time you will not be able to carry on the work of your Department. That will not matter as we shall make some temporary arrangement till you are well enough

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

<sup>1</sup> J N Papers, N M M L.

**29. To John Matthai<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
1st August 1947

My dear Matthai,

I write to you rather formally to invite you to join the new Cabinet that is being formed. You have been a tower of strength to us and to me specially and I do not know how I could carry on without you.

<sup>1</sup> J N. Papers, N M M L.

As you know, all existing Members of the Cabinet (minus the Pakistanis) will continue with the exception of Rajaji who will become a Governor.

I do not propose to send a list of portfolios to the Governor-General. I shall only send him the names of Members of the Cabinet. Later we shall ourselves meet for the allotment of portfolios. I do not think we need make many changes in the existing position, though some changes are inevitable owing to Rajaji's going away. I think it would be desirable for you to continue in your present Department to which you have already given so much time and energy. We are going to have a tough time and will have to face difficult problems. We shall face them, of course, as a united team working together and sharing each other's burdens.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 30. To Abul Kalam Azad<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
1 August 1947

My dear Maulana,

I am writing to you rather formally to invite you to join the new Cabinet. This is hardly necessary, but still I felt that certain formalities should be observed.

As you know, all the existing Members, excepting those who have gone to Pakistan, will continue minus Rajaji who will become a Governor.

The question of portfolios will be finally determined later. But I take it that you would like to continue with the Education portfolio.

We shall have very difficult problems to face. The only way we can do so is to work as a joint team sharing each other's burdens. The old departmental system of work will have to give way to joint consultation on all important matters.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 31. The Constitution of the New Cabinet<sup>1</sup>

36. Rumours in the press and private sources of information had indicated to me that Nehru was about to submit to me an unimaginative Cabinet of old-time Congressites ... I began by admitting that as constitutional Governor-General I would have to accept any names he put to me. He said that he would always look to me for advice in these matters

37. I told him. that unless he got rid of a lot of top-weights like Rajagopalachari and Maulana Azad, he would find himself greatly hampered .that Bhabha and Matthai should both be kept since they were extremely able and fearless .that Baldev Singh appeared to me to be unsatisfactory as Defence Member though I realised he was the only available Sikh, that Rajendra Prasad was a dear old man... With such a Cabinet the Congress could remain in power for the next few years; without it, it was done

38. Nehru agreed in principle, but said that there was a remarkable dearth of good young men, between the ages of 30 and 45, but that it was his intention to pick fairly unknown young men and put them in as Deputy Ministers or Parliamentary Secretaries to get experience I told him I thought that this was a serious matter for India, and I sincerely trusted that he would give it his closest personal attention.

1. Extracts from Mountbatten's personal report dated 1 August 1947. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 12, pp 451-452

### 32. Mountbatten's Note of Interview with Nehru<sup>1</sup>

I told him about the Secretary of State giving a party for representatives of the three parties from the Lords and Commons to meet Krishna Menon, and that Krishna Menon wanted Pandit Nehru to know about this I said that I would mention this in my next letter to Krishna Menon

1 2 August 1947. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 12, pp. 486-487.

2. I told him the question of jail releases<sup>2</sup> had been discussed with the Partition Council that morning and that it had been agreed that Sardar Patel and Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan should prepare a joint scheme for India and Pakistan and recommend to all Provincial Governments as to the level up to which jail releases should be counted.

3. I told him how gratified I was that everybody had accepted my proposal<sup>3</sup> that the I.N.A prisoners should have their sentences reduced by the Commander-in-Chief to the level which would get them out on the general releases, and that the parties had agreed that there should be absolutely no publicity given to the I.N.A. prisoners. Pandit Nehru said that he was in full agreement

4. I told him that I had reconsidered the matter of Governors' fortnightly letters and had come to the conclusion that it might be thought unconstitutional if I accepted Pandit Nehru's offer to continue them. But I asked him if I could see the fortnightly confidential reports from Provincial Governors, to which he replied "Of course".

5. He told me that he was proposing to tell Governors and Prime Ministers to write personal letters to him. I told him that I proposed to invite the Governors up to stay with me during the cold weather for a conference, and that I hoped he would be able to address them. He said that he thought this would be a good idea

6. I informed him that I proposed to recommend to the Secretary of State that Sir Fazl Ali's<sup>4</sup> appointment as a permanent Judge of the Federal Court should be made before the 15th August. Pandit Nehru agreed

2 There were only 11 I.N.A. men still in jail, with sentences ranging from 2 to 7 years rigorous imprisonment, all said to have been given for brutality and not for political reasons. The Federal Court had recommended a reduction of sentence in most of these cases

3 On the occasion of 15 August Auchinleck was prepared to reduce the sentences of the I.N.A. prisoners to the level needed for bringing them within the amnesty clause as was done in 1921 and 1937, and both Nehru and Jinnah were prepared to accept this solution

4 Sayyid Fazl Ali (1886-1959), Judge of the Patna High Court, 1928, Chief Justice, 1943, Chairman, Royal Indian Navy Mutiny Enquiry Commission, 1946, delegate to U.N. General Assembly, 1947, Judge, Federal Court of India, 1947-50, Judge, Supreme Court of India, 1950-52, Governor of Orissa, 1952-54 and of Assam, from 1956 till his death

7. I told him that I had spoken to Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan that morning and had suggested to them that they should appoint the Pakistan High Commissioner for India before the 15th August, so as to represent Pakistan at the celebrations in Delhi on that date.

8. I urged Pandit Nehru to appoint his High Commissioner for Pakistan by the 13th August, so that he might be in Karachi in time to represent India at the celebrations there. Pandit Nehru said that he thought the High Commissioner would probably be Mr. Sri Prakasa, but that he would let me know.

9. We also discussed the question of the Gurkhas, a note of which was taken by the Conference Secretary for action

### 33. To Sudhir Ghosh<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
3 August 1947

My dear Sudhir,

I have just received your letter of the 1st I have not received your letter of July 15 which you say you sent through Jagjivan Ram.

I am sorry for the hush up in India House over Krishna Menon's appointment<sup>2</sup> In this matter I am entirely to blame. Certainly it is not Krishna Menon's fault. I had especially asked him not to mention it to anyone and I intended writing to Vellodi personally. I forgot to do so. Work has been very exacting here during the past few weeks and the Indonesian affair<sup>3</sup> has added to our difficulties

I am writing to Vellodi about this

1 Sudhir Ghosh Papers, N M M L

2 In his letter of 1 August 1947 Sudhir Ghosh wrote to Nehru that Vellodi, who was officiating as High Commissioner, felt very hurt that he had not been informed about the appointment of Krishna Menon as High Commissioner

3 Towards the end of July 1947, after a protracted struggle between the Indonesian Republic and the Netherlands, the Dutch began a military attack against Indonesia, and labelled it 'police action' to prevent international intervention



I am sorry about the postponement of the B.B.C. debate<sup>4</sup> on Sterling Balances. But we had no choice in the matter when our delegation urgently demanded it. Anyway we appear to have obtained good terms.<sup>5</sup>

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

- 4 In the same letter Sudhir Ghosh said that the Friends of India Group had organised a discussion on the sterling balances on the B.B.C. but on the demand of the Indian delegation the B.B.C. forum was cancelled
- 5 On 14 August 1947, the Treasury announced that the Indian and British delegations had examined and agreed that a sum of £ 35,000,000 should be available from India's existing balances for expenditure in any currency area up to 31 December 1947. In addition, a working balance of £ 30,000,000 was to be at the disposal of the Reserve Bank of India.

### 34. To V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
3 August 1947

My dear Krishna,

I have received your 3 notes dated 30th July. I am very sorry that a storm has broken out over your appointment<sup>2</sup> I had indications of this from several sources even before your letter came. I do not quite know what I can do about it from here. I am writing to Vellodi and Bhandari. I have spoken to Maharaj Singh also (he is taking this letter) and asked him to have a talk with Vellodi and others.

Of course you are not to blame at all. I asked you especially not to mention the matter to anyone. I intended writing to Vellodi myself but in the rush of work I forgot about this.

This business will add to your difficulties, and you had enough of them already. But I am sure you will get over them. Meanwhile I hope you will do your utmost to smooth over matters and gain the goodwill of your colleagues as well as all Indians. It is an essential part of our work to have that goodwill.

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. News of this appointment had leaked through governmental sources

We asked you yesterday not to go to the U.S.A. for the Indonesian affair.<sup>3</sup> In view of developments this was not immediately necessary. Shahrir has however gone today to Bombay and he leaves for New York tomorrow. He will be very useful there. I think you had better carry on in London. Your absence at this stage, when a new situation has to be faced, may prove harmful.

I feel also that you should not leave London for the U.N. General Assembly meeting. It is better for you to concentrate on the big work you have undertaken.

About the Flag, we shall send you instructions later. But my present inclination is that you might fly the Union Jack also on August 15th. Subsequently only the National Flag should be flown, except on special occasions when the Union Jack may also be flown. We shall probably make a list of such occasions.

We have asked Vellodi to stay on as Deputy High Commissioner for the present. We may send him to the U.N. Assembly meeting as an alternate delegate but this is not decided yet. After that, or about that time, he can return to India.

I think H.M.G.'s attitude in the Indonesian affair has been entirely unsatisfactory.<sup>4</sup> I also think that it would have been wholly wrong for us to put off an approach to the Security Council. As it is we delayed too long—chiefly because of H.M.G. Now, apart from the big questions involved, I want sufficient stress to be laid on the destruction of the Indian Dakota by the Dutch.<sup>5</sup> What the exact law may be I do not know but I think it was a scandalous thing for the Dutch to do. This apparently was part of the police action. We must make a good deal of noise about this.

I am anxious that the present Dutch position in Indonesia should not be stabilised. We must insist on their reverting to the position before they started hostilities.

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

3 The Security Council considered the Indonesian question from 1 August to 26 August 1947.

4 In a statement in Parliament on 22 July 1947 Bevin said that while the British Government would seize any opportunity to bring about a peaceful settlement of the Indonesian conflict he could not specify what means the Government would adopt to bring this about.

5 On 29 July 1947 Dutch fighter planes shot down an Indian Dakota carrying medical supplies for the Indonesian Red Cross.

**35. Personal Telegram to Abdur Rahman<sup>1</sup>**

3.8.1947

Your telegram dated July 28th.<sup>2</sup> Appreciate what you say but Fazl Ali appointed to Federal Court over two months ago and Ram Lal<sup>3</sup> has been designated Chief Justice East Punjab. Your absence from India on public duty will certainly not affect your interests. On your return we shall consider this question in consultation with you.

- 1 Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No. 2(71)-UNO-I/47, p 75/corr, National Archives of India.
2. Abdur Rahman had in his telegram requested favourable consideration for appointment either to the Federal Court or as Chief Justice of the Eastern Punjab High Court, failing which he would take leave preparatory to retirement
- 3 Dewan Ram Lal, Government advocate, 1933, Advocate-General, 1937, Judge, Lahore High Court, 1938.

**36. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
4 August 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I give below the names of my colleagues in the new Cabinet:

- 1 Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
- 2 Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
- 3 Dr. Rajendra Prasad
4. Dr. John Matthai
5. Shri Jagjivan Ram
6. Sardar Baldev Singh
7. Shri C H Bhabha
8. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur
9. Shri Rafi Ahmad Kidwai
- 10 Dr B R Ambedkar
- 11 Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee
- 12 Shri Shanmukham Chetty
13. Shri Narhar Vishnu Gadgil

You will notice that all the existing Members, with the exception of Shri

1 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 12, pp. 501-502

C. Rajagopalachari, have been included in this list. Six new names have been added. I have obtained the consent of all of them.

2. We shall decide finally about the portfolios when we have our first meeting. We do not intend making any changes in the present distribution of portfolios among the eight existing Members except that Mr. Rajagopalachari's departure will necessitate a change.

3. We might have to consider a new arrangement of portfolios somewhat later. Thus Food and Agriculture might be combined. Planning will have to be given some place.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 37. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
4 August 1947

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I give below the list of names for the new Cabinet which I have sent to the Governor-General: .<sup>2</sup>

The portfolios have not been mentioned. It is proposed, however, that portfolios with the old Members should be retained by them except for a change necessitated by Rajaji's departure.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

1 *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol 4, p 538

2 For the names see the preceding item

### 38. The Policy of Free India<sup>1</sup>

Owing to the secession of some parts of India the immediate problem is to finalise the partition and settle down to work in the new conditions.

1 Cable published in *The New Republic* (U.S.A.), 4 August 1947.

The food situation is very serious. This has been worsened by the Dutch action in Indonesia in seizing rice stocks meant for India.<sup>2</sup> We have to take urgent steps to obtain foodstuffs from abroad and to add to our domestic production. Lack of foreign exchange comes in the way both in importing food and in buying capital equipment from abroad. Hence the release of sterling balances is of vital importance to us.

We have already a dozen big projects in hand for damming rivers, developing power resources, irrigation, etc. Some of these are as big in area as the T.V.A. We shall push these on as rapidly as possible. We propose to appoint a planning commission to develop industry, agriculture and social services in an organised and planned manner. Scientific research will have first priority.

Our provincial governments are already committed to far-reaching land reforms to result in the abolition of the landlord system and also to the development of popular education. These will be fully supported by the Central Government.

A great majority of British civil servants will be leaving India by August 15. Probably very few British civil servants or military officers will be left in India after March 1948. Only a few who might be required by us for special purposes will be invited to remain. It is our definite policy completely to Indianize the civil and defense services by next April.

We propose to have a relatively small but a highly efficient army, a growing air force and, to begin with, a small navy. Training schools for these are being enlarged or being established.

Foreign capital will be welcome in India for our schemes of development on profitable terms, but the control of Indian industry must remain in Indian hands. Some of our basic industries and public utilities are likely to be controlled by the State.

It is difficult to prophesy about the future, but it seems inevitable that India and Pakistan must have much in common and will have to co-operate in many fields. This cooperation should lead to closer relations and possibly to some kind of union. That can only come with mutual goodwill and the force of circumstances.

In our foreign relations we have emphasised our desire not to be entangled in power politics and rival blocs but to try to be friendly with all nations. We are anxious to develop our own resources and raise our standards of living, and we shall do our utmost to preserve peace.

2 It was reported on 25 July that rice earmarked for India totalling 9,000 tons, in Probolinggo and Banjuwangi in Java, had fallen into Dutch hands and been confiscated.

We have been greatly disturbed by the recent happenings in Indonesia. Military aggressive action on a big scale involving organised destruction by bombing of the nerve centres of the country is a negation of the United Nations Charter. If there is any dispute between nations it must be referred to arbitration or to the U.N. For any power to refuse arbitration and to take unilateral action is to strike a grievous blow at the United Nations.

The League of Nations failed because the individual powers ignored it and went ahead with their own expansionist schemes. The U.N. will suffer a like fate if it remains passive when war-like operations are started without any reference to it. This is a matter which affects Asia intimately but it affects the whole world, for in it lie the seeds of war and of destruction of world cooperation for the maintenance of peace. Indonesia has become a symbol and a test for all the powers and more specially for the United Nations.

Today, on the eve of independence, India's mood is strange and perplexed. There is a feeling of quiet confidence and triumph at her achievement and, at the same time, deep sorrow for all that has happened during the first year and the secession of part of the country. We realize fully that we have to face a multitude of very difficult problems both nationally and internationally. This is a sobering thought and yet the ultimate feeling is one of confidence in ourselves and in our future.

### 39. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
5 August 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Your letter dated the 1st August <sup>2</sup> You ask me about Sir Bertie Staig,<sup>3</sup>

1 File No 990/GG-43, Coll No II, 1947, p 2, President's Secretariat.

2 In his letter of 1 August 1947, Mountbatten communicated to Nehru Staig's inquiry whether the new Government would wish to retain him in his present office as Auditor-General. He indicated his willingness to serve the Government of India.

3. Bertie Munro Staig (1892-1952); Financial Adviser, Military Finance, Government of India, 1935, Financial Commissioner, Railways, 1937, Auditor-General of India, 1945-48.

the Auditor-General. It is, as you know, our general policy to keep those members of the services who desire to continue serving. It is also our general policy to have Indians in all important offices, wherever such Indians are available. But, for the present, we do not want to displace any person who chooses to continue in his present office.

Sir Bertie Staig may, therefore, continue to serve as Auditor-General.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

#### 40. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
5 August 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

In your letter of the 14th July<sup>2</sup> you discuss the question of your future staff and various other matters I think we have already dealt with those parts of your letter which refer to your personal staff In this matter we would like you to exercise your own discretion I am glad that Lord Ismay will be staying on.

In paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 of your letter you refer to the Secretary to the Governor-General (official) It is not quite clear to us what the duties of this officer might be I suggest that he might not be appointed at this stage. Perhaps later, if it is found necessary, someone might be appointed to that office

I have already written to you how much we appreciate your suggestion to move into a smaller house. I have no doubt that this would create a considerable impression in people's minds and would be generally welcomed by them as an indication of the new order I have also little doubt that the Viceroy's House, or, at any rate, a large part of it, is likely to be used for some other public purpose in the future.

On the other hand, any change-over at present would rather add to our difficulties than lessen them. It is no easy matter to find a suitable house for you and the process of going from one place to another will

1 Lord Mountbatten Papers, Broadlands Archives Trust, Broadlands, Romsey, Hampshire

2 Mountbatten had in his letter discussed the staff to be retained in India after the transfer of power, the question of handling of official papers after 13 August, and the future of the Viceroy's House in Delhi and the Viceregal Lodge at Simla

be a complicated one. We feel, therefore, that you should continue to live in the Viceroy's House, or, as it will now be called, "Government House".

I would suggest, however, that the public entertainment rooms of the Government House might be used in future, when needed, for Government entertainments and not only for the Governor-General's entertainments and parties, and that a part of the building might be used for Government guests, chiefly from foreign countries. There is at present no proper accommodation for them. They have been often treated of course as the Viceroy's guests.

If you consider these proposals feasible, perhaps some kind of a brief statement might be issued later stating that you had offered to change over to a smaller house but that in view of various circumstances we had decided, for the present, to continue the existing arrangement, subject to the changes mentioned.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

#### 41. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
6 August 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Thank you for your letter of the 5th August sending me a list of dates when the Union Jack might be flown in India.<sup>2</sup> I take it that this means that the Union Jack will be flown on public buildings in addition to the National Flag.

There is only one date in the list which I would suggest is not quite appropriate. That is August 15th, Independence Day. On this day the National Flag has a particular significance and I think it should stand by itself.

So far as next August 15th is concerned, I understood that this had been agreed to. I suggest that the same rule might apply to anniversaries of this date.

1 File No 1446/34/GG/43, Coll No I. President's Secretariat.

2. Mountbatten's list of dates was as follows: 1 January—Army Day, 1 April—Air Force Day, 24 May—Commonwealth Day, 12 June—King's Official Birthday, 14 June—United Nation's Flag Day, 4 August—Queen's Birthday, 7 November—Navy Day, 11 November—Remembrance Day for both World Wars, 25 April—Anzac Day and 15 August—Independence Day



I might inform you that I was asked what should be done in India House, London, on next August 15th. Normally, of course, only the National Flag will be flown. But I thought that in London on that particular day it would be fit and proper for the Union Jack also to be flown on India House. Instructions to this effect have been sent to our High Commissioner.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 42. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
6 August 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I wrote to you on August 5th about Sir Bertie Staig and stated that for the present he could stay on as Auditor-General.

2 Certain technical difficulties have been pointed out to me. As a member of the I.C.S desiring to continue serving in India, he would be welcome to do so and if at any time the question of his retirement is considered, he would naturally get his proportionate compensation etc. As Auditor-General he is more or less in the same position as a Judge of the Federal Court and his appointment continues indefinitely for some years, probably four. The question thus arises whether his continuing now means our committing ourselves to another four years. That would be a difficult commitment for us or anyone in these changing times and conditions. We would like him to stay on for the present. But we would not like to bind ourselves down to any period. Indeed in the new constitution we are making there are special provisions about the Auditor-General. It is doubtful how far under the existing Act we can do away with such a commitment in case he continues in his present office or is appointed afresh to it.

3. It is possible, of course, for changes to be made in the Schedules of the Government of India Act. But before we do this we should like to have Sir Bertie Staig's reaction to what I have written above.<sup>2</sup>

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

<sup>1</sup> File No 990/GG-43, Coll. No II, 1947, p 10, President's Secretariat

<sup>2</sup> Mountbatten replied on 11 August that Staig accepted these terms and would stay on for only one more year

43. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
6 August 1947

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I have just seen a letter dated 5 August, addressed by P.V.R. Rao<sup>2</sup> to Tarlok Singh<sup>3</sup> stating that the Home Department has come to the conclusion that Oulsnam,<sup>4</sup> Secretary, Health Department, should be relieved with effect from 15 August. I am rather surprised to learn this, somewhat indirectly, as I have been proceeding on the assumption that Oulsnam will stay for a short time more. Indeed I have been discussing various matters with him and have asked him to take certain action. Just at present the Health Department is completely depleted and new people will have to be brought in. I should have thought that before any decision was arrived at in such a matter some kind of reference might have been made to the acting Member for Health; otherwise, there is bound to be dislocation and sometimes contrary policies being pursued.

I was given to understand by you that no one who chose to stay on is going to be asked to leave summarily. In accordance with that I proceeded on the basis that Oulsnam was staying on, for a while at least. Whether Oulsnam is particularly suited for it or not is beside the point.

Apart from this individual matter, there is another aspect to be considered. Any action taken in regard to officers of a particular Department should, I imagine, be taken in consultation with the Member concerned. Otherwise his plans might be completely upset.

For the last three days I have had daily interviews with Oulsnam and, in fact, I am seeing him this morning. This was with the purpose of organising the Health Department and making some appointments. The inti-

1 *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol. 4, pp 544-545.

2 P.V.R. Rao (b 1909), joined ICS 1933; served in the Governor-General's Secretariat and in the Home, Defence and Finance Ministries, 1941-49, Secretary, Government of Bombay, Education and Finance Departments, 1949-52, Minister in the High Commission of India, London, 1952-54, Chief Secretary, Hyderabad, 1955, Advisor to the Governor during the period of President's rule in Kerala, 1959, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Community Development, 1960-62, appointed Defence Secretary in November 1962 and later Secretary, Department of Special Economic Coordination.

3 P.V.R. Rao wrote that though Oulsnam wished to continue serving the Government of India for a short period after 15 August 1947, Patel had decided that his services should be terminated on 15 August, and that he had been informed accordingly.

4 S.H.Y. Oulsnam (1898-1972), joined ICS 1921, Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Education, Health and Lands, 1940, Joint Secretary, 1943; Secretary, Department of Health, 1945-47.

mation that he is going in about a week's time suddenly upsets all this. The notice appears to me to be very short and people might feel that we are acting in too great a hurry without giving enough time to persons who have been in service for a considerable period.

Last evening Lady Mountbatten<sup>5</sup> came to me and mentioned Bhatia's case<sup>6</sup> as well as one or two others. Her point was that it was not fair to suddenly push out a person at short notice. I assured her that this was not our policy and that we are asking the Madras Government and the Bengal Government not to proceed in this way in the case of I.M.S. officers. Oulsnam's case now will belie the assurance I gave her and it will be difficult to justify. Of course, she has no official position in this matter. She is only connected with a number of medical associations, like the tuberculosis and other associations and she was worried about them.

I am rather at a loss to know how I am to talk to Oulsnam when he comes to see me. It seems rather odd that I should be completely unaware of what was going to happen to him and that I should have talked to him till yesterday on a different basis. I am put in a somewhat false position. All I can tell him today is that I was not aware of this step and that I shall give more thought to it.

I hope to see you today and discuss this matter more fully.

I am enclosing a copy of Rao's letter to Tarlok Singh.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

5 Edwina Ashley Countess Mountbatten (1901-1960), married Lord Mountbatten, 1922, Superintendent-in-Chief, St John Ambulance brigade, 1942, Chairman, St John and Red Cross Services Hospitals, 1948

6 Colonel Sohan Lal Bhatia, joined I.M.S. 1917; appointed Surgeon-General, Government of Madras in May 1947, but that Government wanted to appoint a member of the provincial service to that post.

#### 44. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
7 August 1947

My dear Vallabhbhai,  
I spoke to you the other day about the story of Subhas Bose's wife<sup>2</sup> and

1 J.N. Collection

2 Emilie Schenkl, worked as Subhas Bose's Secretary in 1934 and 1935

child.<sup>3</sup> I now enclose a paper containing some particulars. Could you kindly write to Nathu Lall<sup>4</sup> who is in Antwerp and ask him to inquire into the matter and arrange help if necessary?

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Anita (b 1942).

4. A friend of Subhas Bose

#### 45. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
10 August 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Thank you for your letter of the 9th August about the days on which the Union Jack should be flown.<sup>2</sup> We shall gladly consider the question of August 15th next year, as you have suggested, with the Pakistan Government.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 J N Collection

2 Mountbatten wrote that as 15 August 1947 had been struck out from the list of the days on which the Union Jack should be flown on both the Dominions, it would be a good gesture if the high commissioners of both the Dominions raised this matter simultaneously on 1st July 1948, so that the Union Jack could be flown in future years on that date.

#### 46. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
10 August 1947

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I enclose a letter received from Krishna Menon. You will remember that the question of arms traffic<sup>2</sup> came up before us when he was here and I

1 J N. Collection

2. In his letter of 7 August 1947 Krishna Menon had reported that Kral, a Czech citizen who had been in India for many years, had negotiated an arrangement for the sale of arms by the Czech Government to Hyderabad, and that as a result of his intervention the negotiations had come to a standstill. But he advised Nehru not to make formal protests

had asked him to inquire. This relates to that inquiry. As he is anxious that this matter should be kept completely secret, I am sending you the original letter. When you have done with it, will you kindly return it to me?

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

#### 47. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
12 August 1947

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I enclose copy of a letter received from my sister from Moscow, also copy of a telegram from her.

2 You will read what she has written about sending an Ambassador to Iran. I expect to hear officially from the Iranian Government within the next few days. Ali Zaheer's name, you will notice, was suggested by the Iranian Ministers. This was done by them without any instigation on our part. I think that in the circumstances we should choose Ali Zaheer. This would please them and at the same time solve one of our problems. I think it is desirable that No. 2 in our Embassy there should be a Hindu. I have in mind a young Hindu in the Secretariat who knows Persian rather well. I forget his name. He is one of the young men chosen by us for the Foreign Service previously.

3. You suggested that it might be desirable to delay this and other appointments for some little time. I think this is difficult now and, having regard to all the circumstances, we should go ahead as soon as possible. I do not think any person will misunderstand or criticise this particular appointment.

4. I shall, of course, wait for the formal communication from Iran. But I should like to be ready by that time. That is to say, I should like to get Ali Zaheer's formal consent. He came to see me in Lucknow today, but I did not mention this matter to him.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.

48. The National Flag<sup>1</sup>

I have read a number of letters that have appeared in *The Hindustan Times* in the feature 'Thanks for the Flag'. I am afraid I am unconvinced by any of the criticisms made of the 'design' and I think that the Flag, as adopted, successfully represents, both artistically and symbolically, what it is meant to represent.

The Flag is above all a symbol. This Flag of ours with the three colours and with the *charkha*<sup>2</sup> has been a symbol to us, for many years, of freedom and unity as well as the labouring masses of India. It would have been quite impossible for us to vary the Flag essentially without doing violence to that sentiment and the symbolism that has grown around it. The Flag was originally adopted after very careful consideration and the choice and arrangement of the colours was and is, I think, very artistic and beautiful. The *charkha* added a certain beauty of conception to the Flag. Because the full *charkha* is not there now, it must not be imagined that we have given up the *charkha* or what it meant. In the resolution of the Constituent Assembly, it was stated clearly that the wheel in the centre represented the *charkha*. This symbolic representation of the *charkha* retains in its entirety the conception behind the *charkha* and is, in fact, a continuation of that idea in a somewhat more feasible and artistic form more suited to the Flag.

That form was not casually chosen but was taken from the wheel from Asoka's capital. That wheel, of course, was no invention of Asoka, it was older than Asoka. But the fact that it was connected with Asoka and is to be seen on his columns was an additional incentive for us to adopt that particular form.

The suggestion that the wheel should have been bigger and should have covered part of the saffron and green strips shows a lack of appreciation of the artistry of the entire design. That would have spoilt the Flag.

The Flag thus, as adopted, fulfils all the requirements that we demand from it. It is beautiful and artistic, it is essentially the Flag of our struggle for freedom and our triumph, it is the Flag representing the common man and the masses of India and at the same time, modern as it is, it takes

1 New Delhi, 12 August 1947. This letter to the editor of *The Hindustan Times* was printed on 14 August 1947.

2 *Chakra* or wheel replacing *charkha* was held by some as representative of the old autocracy and not in keeping with the spirit that lay behind the *charkha* which symbolized the masses.

us back to the great cultural traditions of ancient India which have continued, in some measure, throughout the ages. It is a Flag thus both of the permanence of Indian culture and the dynamic quality of India today which, we hope and trust, will be directed towards the betterment and liberation of the masses of this country.

#### 49. Message on the Departure of British Troops

During the last few days vital changes have taken place in the relationship between India and England. The bonds that tied India to England against the wishes of her people have been removed, resulting in a far more friendly feeling in India towards England than at any time previously. That unnatural relationship is giving place gradually to a normal and natural relationship between two countries who desire to cooperate for their mutual advantage and the common good.

Few things are more significant of this change than the withdrawal of British troops from India. Foreign armies are the most obvious symbols of foreign rule. They are essentially armies of occupation and as such their presence must inevitably be resented. No soldier likes this business, for it is neither war nor peace but a continuing tension and living in a hostile atmosphere. I am sure that sensitive British officers and men must have disliked being placed in this abnormal position.

It is good, therefore, for all concerned that the British armed forces in India are being withdrawn and are going home to serve their country in other ways. As an Indian I have long demanded the withdrawal of British forces from India, for they were a symbol to us of much that we disliked. But I had no grievance against them as individuals and I liked and admired many whom I came across. What we disliked was the system which inevitably brought ill will in its train apart from other consequences.

I know the good qualities of the British soldier and I should like our own army to develop those qualities. On the occasion of the departure of the first contingent of British troops from India I wish them godspeed and trust that between them and the soldiers and people of India there will be goodwill and friendship which can only subsist between equals who do

1 New Delhi, 13 August 1947 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 12, pp. 695-696. The first contingent of British troops left Bombay on 17 August 1947

not fear each other. We have nothing to fear from each other in the future and there are many things in which we can cooperate together.

It is rare in history that such a parting takes place not only peacefully but also with goodwill. We are fortunate that this should have happened in India. That is a good augury for the future.

## 50. The New Cabinet<sup>1</sup>

The new Cabinet, which will function from August 15, 1947, will consist of the following Members. Their portfolios are indicated opposite their names:

Jawaharlal Nehru	:	Prime Minister; External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, Scientific Research.
Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel	:	Home; Information & Broadcasting; States
Dr. Rajendra Prasad	:	Food & Agriculture
Maulana Abul Kalam Azad	:	Education.
Dr. John Matthai	:	Railways & Transport.
Sardar Baldev Singh	:	Defence.
Shri Jagjivan Ram	:	Labour.
Mr. C.H. Bhabha	:	Commerce
Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai	:	Communications.
Rajkumari Armit Kaur	:	Health.
Dr. B.R. Ambedkar	:	Law.
Shri R.K. Shanmukham Chetty	:	Finance.
Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee	:	Industries & Supplies.
Shri N.V. Gadgil	:	Works, Mines and Power.

Jawaharlal Nehru

<sup>1</sup> 14 August 1947. File No 2(19)/47-PMS Printed in Newspaper, 15 August 1947.



## 51. The Appointed Day<sup>1</sup>

88703

The Appointed Day has come—the day appointed by destiny, and India stands forth again after long slumber and struggle—awake, vital, free and independent. The past clings on to us still in some measure and we have to do much before we redeem the pledges we have so often taken. Yet the turning-point is past, history begins anew for us, the history which we shall live and act, and others will write about.

It is a fateful moment for us in India, for all Asia and for the world. A new star rises, the star of freedom in the East, a new hope comes into being, a vision long cherished materialises. May the star never set and that hope never be betrayed.

We rejoice in that freedom, even though clouds surround us, and many of our people are sorrow-stricken and difficult problems encompass us. But freedom brings responsibilities and burdens and we have to face them in the spirit of a free and disciplined people.

On this day our first thoughts go to the architect of this freedom, the Father of our Nation who, embodying the old spirit of India, held aloft the torch of freedom and lighted up the darkness that surrounded us. We have often been unworthy followers of his and have strayed from his message, but not only we, but succeeding generations, will remember this message and bear the imprint in their hearts of this great son of India, magnificent in his faith and strength and courage and humility. We shall never allow that torch of freedom to be blown out, however high the wind or stormy the tempest.

Our next thoughts must be of the unknown volunteers and soldiers of freedom who, without praise or reward, have served India even unto death.

We think also of our brothers and sisters who have been cut off from us by political boundaries and who unhappily cannot share at present in the freedom that has come. They are of us and will remain of us whatever may happen, and we shall be sharers in their good and ill fortune alike.

The future beckons to us. Whither do we go and what shall be our endeavour? To bring freedom and opportunity to the common man, to the peasants and workers of India. To fight and end poverty and ignorance and disease. To build up a prosperous, democratic and progressive

1. Message to the nation on Independence Day printed in the newspapers on 15 August 1947.

nation, and to create social, economic and political institutions which will ensure justice and fullness of life to every man and woman.

We have hard work ahead. There is no resting for any one of us till we redeem our pledge in full, till we make all the people of India what destiny intended them to be. We are citizens of a great country, on the verge of bold advance, and we have to live up to that high standard. All of us, to whatever religion we may belong, are equally the children of India with equal rights, privileges and obligations. We cannot encourage communalism or narrow-mindedness, for no nation can be great whose people are narrow in thought or in action.

To the nations and peoples of the world we send greetings and pledge ourselves to cooperate with them in furthering peace, freedom and democracy.

And to India, our much-loved motherland, the ancient, the eternal and the ever-new, we pay our reverent homage and we bind ourselves afresh to her service. *Jai Hind!*

# THE FRAMING OF THE CONSTITUTION

## 1. A Federal Constitution<sup>1</sup>

Pandit Nehru stated that the point<sup>2</sup> was discussed by the Union Constitution Committee<sup>3</sup> at its meeting yesterday and its conclusions were as follows:—

(1) that the Constitution should be a Federal structure with a strong Centre;

(2) that there should be three exhaustive legislative lists, viz, Federal, Provincial and Concurrent with residuary powers to the Centre; and

(3) that the States should be on a par with the provinces as regards the Federal Legislative List, subject to the consideration of any special matter which may be raised when the lists have been fully prepared.

(4) It was accepted as a general principle that the executive authority of the federation should be co-extensive with its legislative authority.<sup>4</sup>

1. Extracts from the draft minutes of the second joint meeting of the Union and Provincial Constitution Committees held on 7 June 1947 under the presidency of Rajendra Prasad Constituent Assembly of India, Constitution Section, File No. CA/64/47, Ministry of Law, Government of India.
2. Whether India should be a unitary State with provinces functioning as agents and delegates of the central authority, or a federation of autonomous units leaving certain specified powers to the centre
3. A resolution passed on 30 April 1947 by the Constituent Assembly recommended that two separate committees be appointed, one to report on the main principles of the Union Constitution and the other on the principles of a model provincial constitution
4. These conclusions were accepted by the joint meeting.

## 2. To the President, Constituent Assembly of India<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

5 July 1947

Sir,

On the 28th April 1947, the Hon'ble Sir N. Gopalaswamy Ayyangar, on

1 Included in the supplementary report of the Union Constitution Committee whose Chairman was Nehru Constituent Assembly of India, Committee Section, File No CA/23/com/47, Ministry of Law, Government of India, also printed in *Constituent Assembly of India, Reports of Committees* (First Series), 1947, pp. 66-67.

behalf of our Committee, presented our first report to the Constituent Assembly. In doing so, he referred to the changes that were developing in the political situation and were likely to affect the nature and scope of the Committee's recommendations, and sought permission to submit a supplementary report at a later date. The House was pleased to grant us leave to do so.

2. Momentous changes have since occurred. Some parts of the country are seceding to form a separate State,<sup>2</sup> and the plan put forward in the Statement of the 16th May on the basis of which the Committee was working is, in many essentials, no longer operative. In particular, we are not now bound by the limitations on the scope of Union powers. The first point accordingly that we considered was whether, in the changed circumstances, the scope of these powers should not be widened. We had no difficulty in coming to a conclusion on this point. The severe limitation on the scope of central authority in the Cabinet Mission's plan was a compromise accepted by the Assembly much, we think, against its judgment of the administrative needs of the country, in order to accommodate the Muslim League.<sup>3</sup> Now that partition is a settled fact, we are unanimously of the view that it would be injurious to the interests of the country to provide for a weak central authority which would be incapable of ensuring peace or coordinating vital matters of common concern and of speaking effectively for the whole country in the international sphere. At the same time, we are quite clear in our minds that there are many matters in which authority must lie solely with the Units and that to frame a constitution on the basis of a unitary State would be a retrograde step, both politically and administratively. We have accordingly come to the conclusion—a conclusion which was also reached by the Union Constitution Committee—that the soundest framework for our constitution is a federation, with a strong Centre. In the matter of distributing powers between the Centre and the Units, we

2 In a broadcast on 3 June 1947, Mountbatten announced that the British Government had accepted his proposal that they should transfer power to one or two Governments of British India, each having Dominion Status, as soon as the necessary arrangements could be made. His proposal also contained a scheme for the partition of the country at the time of the transfer of power.

3. Paragraph 12 of the Cabinet Mission's Statement of 16 May declared that while rejecting the idea of Pakistan, the Mission was aware of the fear of the Muslims that their "culture and political and social life might become submerged in a purely unitary India" in which the Hindus would dominate. It therefore proposed that the provinces were to have full provincial autonomy "subject only to a minimum of central subjects, such as foreign affairs, defence and communications."

think that the most satisfactory arrangement is to draw up three exhaustive lists on the lines followed in the Government of India Act of 1935, viz., the federal, the provincial and the concurrent. We have prepared three such lists accordingly and these are shown in the Appendix.

We think that residuary powers should remain with the Centre. In view however of the exhaustive nature of the three lists drawn up by us, the residuary subjects could only relate to matters which, while they may claim recognition in the future, are not at present identifiable and cannot therefore be included now in the lists.

3. It is necessary to indicate the position of Indian States in the scheme proposed by us. The States which have joined the Constituent Assembly have done so on the basis of the 16th May Statement. Some of them have expressed themselves as willing to cede wider powers to the Centre than contemplated in that Statement.<sup>4</sup> But we consider it necessary to point out that the application to States in general of the federal list of subjects, in so far as it goes beyond the 16th May Statement, should be with their consent. It follows from this that in their case residuary powers would vest with them unless they consent to their vesting in the Centre.

4. To enable States and, if they so think fit, provinces also, to cede wider powers to the Centre, we recommend that the constitution should empower the Federal Government to exercise authority within the Federation on matters referred to them by one or more Units, being understood that the law would extend only to the Units by whom the matter is referred or which afterwards adopt the law. This follows the Australian model as set out in section 51 (xxxvii) of the Australian Constitution Act.<sup>5</sup>

5. We have included in the federal list the item "the strength, organisation and control of the armed forces raised and employed in Indian States". Our intention in doing so is to maintain all the existing powers of coordination and control exercised over such forces.

4. On 28 April 1947, when representatives of eight States took their seats in the Constituent Assembly, B. L. Mitter, Dewan of Baroda, declared. ". we are at one with you in that the Indian Union should be strong at the Centre, so that India may hold her head high in the comity of nations.. ."

5 "The Parliament shall, subject to this Constitution, have power to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to . Matters referred to the Parliament of the Commonwealth by the Parliament or Parliaments of any State or States, so that the law shall extend only to States by whose Parliaments the matter is referred, or which afterwards adopt the law "

6. We recommend to the Assembly the proposals contained in para. 2-D of our previous report on the subject of federal taxation.<sup>6</sup> It is quite clear, however, that the retention by the Federation of the proceeds of all the taxes specified by us would disturb, in some cases violently, the financial stability of the Units and we recommend therefore that provision should be made for an assignment, or a sharing of the proceeds of some of these taxes on a basis to be determined by the Federation from time to time.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,  
Jawaharlal Nehru  
Chairman

6. The Committee recommended the following sources of revenue for the Union.-
1. Duties of customs, including export duties;
  2. Excise duties;
  3. Corporation tax;
  4. Taxes on income other than agricultural income,
  5. Taxes on the capital value of the assets exclusive of agricultural lands of individuals and companies, taxes on the capital of companies,
  6. Duties in respect of succession to property other than agricultural land;
  7. Estate duty in respect of property other than agricultural land,
  8. Fees in respect of any of the matters in the list of Union powers, but not including fees taken in any court, other than the Union court

### 3. To the President, Constituent Assembly of India<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
13th July 1947

Dear Sir,

1. On behalf of the members of the Committee appointed by you in pursuance of the resolution of the Constituent Assembly of the 30th April, 1947, I submitted a memorandum embodying the recommendations of the Committee.

2. The Committee met again on the 12th July, 1947, and decided on certain modifications to be made in the said memorandum. I have the honour to submit this supplementary report containing these recommendations.

1. Constituent Assembly of India, Constitution Section, File No CA/22/47, Ministry of Law, Government of India; also printed in *Constituent Assembly of India, Reports of Committees* (First Series), 1947, pp 64-65.

3. In the opinion of the Committee, clause 3 of the memorandum should contain the following additional sub-clause to enable the Federal Parliament to alter the name of any Unit, namely:—

(e) “alter the name of any Unit.”

4. The Committee is of opinion that the following should be added to sub-clause (2) of clause 6 of Chapter I of Part IV of the memorandum to make it clear that if a member of the Council of State is elected as Vice-President he shall vacate his seat as such member, namely:—

“and if a member of the Federal Parliament is elected to be the Vice-President, he shall vacate his seat as such member”.

5. The Committee is further of the opinion that Part X of the memorandum on the Indian Constitution should be replaced by the following:—

## PART X AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

The amendment of the Constitution may be initiated in either House of the Federal Parliament and when the proposed amendment is passed in each House by a majority of the total membership of that House and by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members of that House present and voting, it shall be presented to the President for his assent; and upon such assent being given the amendment shall come into operation:

Provided that if such amendment is in respect of any provision of the Constitution relating to all or any of the following matters, namely:—

- (a) any change in the Federal Legislative List,
- (b) representation of Units in the Federal Parliament, and
- (c) powers of the Supreme Court,

it will also require to be ratified by the legislatures of Units representing a majority of the population of all the Units of the Federation in which Units representing at least one-third of the population of the Federated States are included.

Explanation—“Unit” in this clause has the same meaning as in clause 14 of Part IV. Where a Unit consists of a group of States, a proposed amendment shall be deemed to be ratified by the legislature of the Unit, if it is ratified by the majority of the legislatures of the States in the Group.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru



#### 4. Amendment of the Rules<sup>1</sup>

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: I am not saying anything on merits.<sup>2</sup> What I was going to say is this. Even if it is taken up, this is something which the Steering Committee must consider. This is a long drawn-out Rule which, even if accepted on merits, has to be looked into by lawyers and others. The question is how it should be accepted. It cannot be taken up in this manner. Otherwise, instead of removing a difficulty we might be creating other difficulties. I submit the proper course is to send it to the Steering Committee

Mr. President. I am putting it to the House.<sup>3</sup>

Shri Sri Prakasa: May I respectfully enquire what will be the position of the new members who have been elected and who have taken their seats? In the light of Rules 4 and 5, will their presence be allowed?

Mr. President: I allowed them to take their seats yesterday. They will continue.

\* \* \* \*

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: May I point out that the question that Shri Sri Prakasa has raised is an important question? The question is how to do it. The bringing up of an informal amendment to the Rules is an improper way. Possibly it will be open to the House to pass a resolution or if it is necessary to change the Rules we may change them. But it must be considered by the appropriate authority. My only submission is that it cannot be taken up in this casual way.

1. 15 July 1947. *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol IV, 1947, p 577.
2. Moving an amendment Sri Prakasa had suggested insertion of a new rule according to which the Governor-General could order fresh elections to the Constituent Assembly from the areas mentioned in paragraphs 4 to 14 of the statement of 3 June 1947. These areas comprised Bengal, Punjab, Sind, N.W.F.P., Baluchistan and Assam
3. It was rejected by the House and Sri Prakasa was informed by the President that he could send the amendment to the Steering Committee.

## 5. The Provincial Constitution<sup>1</sup>

Mr. President, if the Report of the Union Constitution Committee had been under consideration at this time, I would be standing here in a special capacity. But I rise now to remove the misunderstandings that have arisen in the minds of some of the members. It may be that I may not wholly 'succeed in my object. It is quite 'possible that I may fail to convince Maulana Hasrat Mohani who is rather a deep person and claims to be at once the representative and spokesman of both the Communists and Forward Blocists.<sup>2</sup> It is quite obvious that if my fear comes true he 'would suffer from considerable perplexity. But what I intend saying is nothing very incomprehensible and technical. It is quite correct to say that we would be acting improperly if we took up the consideration of the Provincial Constitution without keeping in view the ideals we seek to 'realise and the 'goal we seek to reach.<sup>3</sup> We have, it is true, taken up the consideration of the Provincial Constitution, first.

Six months ago this House passed a resolution which placed before it the plan and the ideals. These were approved. When once the outline of anything has been drawn, the order in which the several problems involved therein are to be taken in hand has to be decided. In this case it so happened that the question of the Provincial Constitution arose earlier and the Report of the Provincial Constitution Committee also was ready earlier. Consequently, members got sufficient time to study this Report. The other Report, however, has been sent to the members only six or seven days ago. Consequently, keeping in view the fact that the members would not have sufficient time to study it, it was considered proper for their convenience not to submit that Report to the House for the time being, but to present the Report of the Provincial Constitution Committee which had been already sufficiently studied. Honourable Members have all received the Report of the Union Constitution Committee. If the President permits, I am ready to present it to the House immediately. The only difficulty in doing so is that the members may complain that they had no time to study it sufficiently and that even if time be given for studying it, it would mean the waste of two or three

1 Speech in the Constituent Assembly, 15 July 1947 *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol. IV, 1947, pp. 583-585

2 Hasrat Mohani had said that all the Forward Bloc and Communist members were absent and therefore, on their behalf, he was protecting their rights

3 Hasrat Mohani had also said that they should proceed on some principles and should not consider the Provincial Constitution before the Union Constitution

days in doing so now. It was in view of this that it was considered proper to present the Report which was ready and had been thoroughly studied. The other Report will also be presented to the House just as this one has been. All of you should know that there is no intention of concealing anything or acting in an underhand manner in following this procedure.

In the present Report the term 'Governor' occurs. This has completely upset the Maulana.<sup>4</sup> I admit that the term 'Governor' has come down to us from the previous regime and that our associations with it are not very happy. But at present we are not concerned with the question of terminology. We do not know whether our Constitution would be in the English or any other language. So far as the term itself is concerned, you are all aware of there being Governors in America as also of the powers and authority they wield. I, therefore, submit that this does not violate in the least the ideas and the principles we have in view. It is my submission that there is no question of principle involved in it. The only question is of the convenient working of this House. If you and Sardar Patel so desire, I am prepared to present the Report of the Union Constitution Committee to the House.

<sup>4</sup> Hasrat Mohani had earlier remarked that in the report presented by Patel, he had stated that they wanted to appoint Governors. With that very word the whole constitution of the Union was being defaced and distorted.

## **6. On the Report of the Union Constitution Committee<sup>1</sup>**

This report lays down certain principles which should govern the constitution of the Union. It is not meant to be a draft of the constitution. After the principles have been decided it is proposed to constitute a drafting committee which will produce a formal draft for the consideration of the next session of the Constituent Assembly.

For purpose of completeness reference has been made in this draft to certain matters which have been dealt with more fully at an early

stage by the Assembly. These matters will thus not be taken into consideration at this stage.

Thus, the preamble and the first paragraph of Part I have been dealt with in the Objectives Resolution of the Constituent Assembly and the final constitution will have to incorporate parts of the Objectives Resolution and the preamble, etc. That Objectives Resolution will have to undergo some modification on account of the political changes resulting from partition, but the basic principles of the Objectives Resolution will remain. That resolution has been referred to a sub-committee for the purpose of making the necessary changes.

The whole of Part II, which deals with citizenship, will not be taken up at this stage. This matter has been considered by an *ad hoc* committee and their final report has to be awaited.

Part III dealing with fundamental rights will also not be considered now, because the Constituent Assembly has already come to decisions in regard to fundamental rights.

All these matters will, of course, be incorporated in the final draft of the constitution and will then come up before the Constituent Assembly.

Thus, the following clauses of the memorandum of the Union Constitution Committee will stand over for the present and, therefore, no amendments need be moved at this stage of these clauses

1. Preamble.
2. First paragraph of clause 1 of Part I,
3. The whole of Part II which deals with citizenship.

Jawaharlal Nehru

## 7. The Principles of the Union Constitution<sup>1</sup>

Mr. President, Sir, I beg to move:

That the Constituent Assembly do proceed to take into consideration the Report on the principles of the Union Constitution<sup>2</sup> submitted by the Committee appointed in pursuance of the resolution of the Assembly of the 30th April, 1947.

1. 21 July 1947. *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol IV, 1947, pp 730-731.

2 Not printed

This Report has been circulated and after the full Report was circulated a Supplementary Report<sup>3</sup> or rather an addendum to the previous report has also been circulated. In this Supplementary Report certain changes have been made in the previous Report. So I am putting before the House the Report as amended by the Supplementary Report. I ventured to circulate a note<sup>4</sup> on this Report to the members of this House two days ago in which I pointed out that so far as the Preamble and part of Clause 1 were concerned, they were covered more or less by the Objectives Resolution of this House. That resolution holds. It may have to be varied in regard to smaller matters because of political developments since it was passed.

A Sub-Committee has been asked to go into the question of drafting. We are not changing the Objectives Resolution at all. What I mean is, adapting it to the Preamble. The Objectives Resolution is history and we stand by all the principles laid down in it. In adapting it to the Preamble, certain obvious changes have to be made. At the present moment, as the House is aware, we are not going into the drafting of the Constitution, but are establishing the principles on which this should be drafted. Therefore, that draft of the Preamble is not necessary. We have settled the principles. So I suggested in my note that we may not consider this matter.

Part II dealing with Citizenship has not been finally decided yet by the Sub-Committee and Part III dealing with Fundamental Rights has already been considered by this House and passed. I would therefore suggest that we might begin consideration of this Report from Part IV, Chapter I, The Federal Executive. There are one or two minor matters which you may have to consider in Parts I and II. It is not necessary to take these one or two simple matters. It is better to begin with Part IV and consider the rest at a later period.

May I point out that I just mentioned that Fundamental Rights have been considered by this House and passed. All that we have passed will of course come up before the House once again for final consideration. There are many new members and it has been pointed out to me by some of them that they were not present here when these Fundamental Rights were considered and passed. Well, it is perfectly true. It is a little difficult for us to go back repeatedly and start afresh. That I do not think will be proper. But, as a matter of fact, all these things will finally come up before the House and it will be open to any of the members to point out anything or to amend any part of it at that time. So,

3 Not printed.

4 See the preceding item

I suggest, Sir, that we may proceed now with Part IV, Chapter I, if you have got the printed pamphlet, it is on page 5. It begins with Federal Executive.

The Report is a fairly long one. At the end of the Report, you will find an Appendix dealing with the judiciary. This is the Report of the *ad hoc* Committee on the Supreme Court. That is only for your information because these conclusions have been more or less incorporated in the Report.

Obviously, when we consider the constitution, the fundamental law of the nation as it is going to be, it is an intricate and important matter and we cannot just rush through it without giving it sufficient time and consideration. I may inform the House that so far as the Union Constitution Committee was concerned, it gave it their very earnest consideration, not once, but several times. We met the Provincial Constitution Committee also on several occasions and this is the result of our joint consultation, but mostly of the Union Constitution Committee's work itself.

I have just been given the list of amendments. This paper contains 228 amendments. I am told, in all we have reached the figure 1,000. I have not seen them as yet, none of them. It is rather difficult for me to deal with them now. I should like to abide by the wishes of the House in the matter.

If I may suggest one thing at present, it is this: that we start with Part IV—Federal Executive. The very first thing that comes up is how the Head of the Federation should be elected. I understand that there are several viewpoints on that. Possibly that particular item may be taken up. It is a simple item. The views may be this way or that; but this is a simple issue and we may consider it now, not only because it is the first item, but because it can easily be taken up without a knowledge of the other large number of amendments. I beg to move this

## 8. On the Mode of Election of the President<sup>1</sup>

Sir, I suggest that we should begin with Part IV, Chapter I.

"Clause 1 (1) The Head of the Federation shall be the President (*Rashtrapati*) to be elected as provided below.

1. Speech in the Constituent Assembly, 21 July 1947. *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol IV, 1947, pp 733-735.

(2) The election shall be by an electoral college consisting of—  
 (a) the members of both Houses of Parliament of the Federation, and

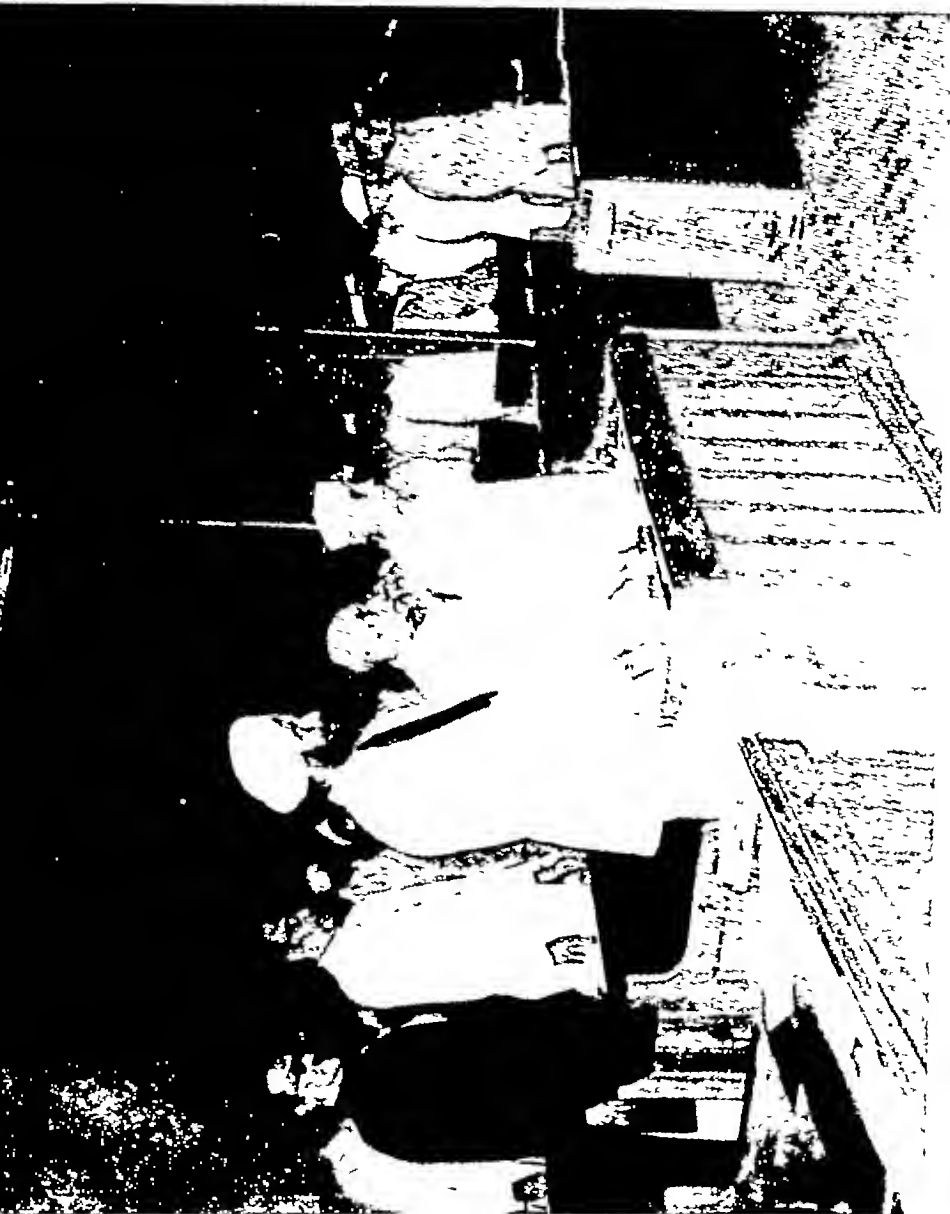
(b) the members of the Legislatures of all the Units or where a Legislature is bicameral the members of the Lower House thereof. In order to secure uniformity in the scale of representation of the Units the votes of the Unit Legislatures shall be weighted in proportion to the population of Units concerned.

Explanation—A Unit means a province or Indian State which returns in its own individual right members to the Federal Parliament. In Indian States which are grouped together for the purpose of returning representatives to the Council of States a Unit means the group so formed and the Legislature of the Unit means the Legislatures of all the States in that group.

(3) The election of the President shall be by secret ballot and on the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote

(4) Subject to the above provisions, elections for the office of President shall be regulated by Act of the Federal Parliament "

Now, Sir, one thing we have to decide at the very beginning is what should be the kind of governmental structure, whether it is one system where there is ministerial responsibility or whether it is the Presidential system as prevails in the United States of America; many members possibly at first sight might object to this indirect election and may prefer an election by adult suffrage. We have given anxious thought to this matter and we came to the very definite conclusion that it would not be desirable, first because we want to emphasize the ministerial character of the Government that power really resided in the ministry and in the legislature and not in the President as such. At the same time we did not want to make the President just a mere figure-head like the French President. We did not give him any real power but we have made his position one of great authority and dignity. You will notice from this draft Constitution that he is also to be Commander-in-Chief of the defence forces just as the American President is. Now, therefore, if we had an election by adult franchise and yet did not give him any real powers, it might become slightly anomalous and there might be just extraordinary expense of time and energy and money without any adequate result. Personally, I am entirely agreeable to the democratic procedure but there is such a thing as too much of a democratic procedure and I greatly fear that if we have a wide scale wasting of the time, we might have no time left for doing anything else except preparing for the elections and having elections. We have got enough elections



AT THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. 14 AUGUST 1947





MIDNIGHT SESSION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, 14 AUGUST 1947

for the Constitution. We shall have elections on adult franchise basis for the Federal Legislature. Now if you add to that an enormous Presidential election in which every adult votes in the whole of India, that will be a tremendous affair. In fact even financially it will be difficult to carry out and otherwise also it will upset most activities for a great part of the year. The American Presidential election actually stops many activities for many many months. Now it is not for me to criticise the American system or any other system. Each country evolves the system of its choice. I do think that while there are virtues in the American system, there are great defects in that system. I am not concerned with the United States of America. I am concerned with India at present and I am quite convinced in my mind that if we try to adopt that here, we shall prevent the development of any ministerial form of Government and we shall waste tremendous amount of time and energy. It is said that the American Presidential election helps the forging of unity of the country by concentrating the mind of the entire country on the Presidential election and on the conduct of those elections. One man becomes the symbol of the country. Here also he will be a symbol of the country; but I think that having that type of election for our President would be a bad thing for us.

Some people suggested, why have even this rather complicated system of election that we have suggested? Why not the Central Legislature by itself elect the President? That will be much simpler, of course, but there is the danger that it will be putting the thing very much on the other side, of having it on too narrow a basis. The Central Legislature may, and probably will, be dominated, say, by one party or group which will form the ministry. If that group elects the President, inevitably they will tend to choose a person of their own party. He will then be even more a dummy than otherwise. The President and the ministry will represent exactly the same thing. It is possible that even otherwise the President may represent the same group or party or ideas. But we have taken a middle course and asked all the members of all the legislatures all over India, in all the units to become voters. It is just likely that they will be choosing a party man. Always that is possible of course. Anyway, we may rule out electing the President by the Central Legislature as being on too narrow a basis.

To have it on adult franchise, you must have some kind of electoral college. It has been suggested that we may have some kind of electoral college which will include all manner of people—members of municipalities, district boards and so on. That, I think, will be introducing confusion without doing good to anybody. It will mean a large number of petty elections for making up the electoral college. In the various legis-

latures you have already a ready-made electoral college, that is, the members of the legislatures all over India. Probably they will number a few thousands. And presumably these members of the legislatures will be in a better position to judge of the merits of the individual in question or the candidates than some other larger electoral college consisting of municipal members and others. So I submit to the House that the method that this Committee has suggested is quite feasible and is the right method to choose a good man who will have authority and dignity in India and abroad

You will notice that in choosing this method we have taken care to prevent any weightage in voting, because legislatures, as has been explained, I believe in a note, may not be representative of the population, of the numbers of the population. A province like the United Provinces or Madras may have a provincial legislature of 300 persons representing some 60 or 55 million people—I do not know how many. Another legislature may have 50 members representing some 50,000. It will be rather absurd to give the same weightage and the result will be that a number of very small units in the country will really dominate the scene. Therefore weightage has been disallowed and some formula will have to be worked out carefully to see that voting is according to the population of the units concerned I beg to move.

## 9. The National Flag<sup>1</sup>

Mr President, it is my proud privilege to move the following resolution:

Resolved that the National Flag of India shall be horizontal tricolour of deep saffron (*Keshri*), white and dark green in equal proportion. In the centre of the white band, there shall be a Wheel in navy blue to represent the Charkha. The design of the Wheel shall be that of the Wheel (*Chakra*) which appears on the abacus of the Sarnath Lion Capital of Asoka<sup>2</sup>

The diameter of the Wheel shall approximate to the width of the white band. The ratio of the width to the length of the Flag shall ordinarily be 2:3.

1. Speech in the Constituent Assembly, 22 July 1947, *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol IV, 1947, pp 761-767

2 The wheel represents the Buddhist Dharma *Chakra* and was used as an emblem by Asoka in the 3rd century B C

This resolution, Sir, is in simple language, in a slightly technical language and there is no glow or warmth in the words that I have read. Yet I am sure that many in this House will feel that glow and warmth which I feel at the present moment, for behind this resolution and the Flag which I have the honour to present to this House for adoption lies history, the concentrated history of a short span in a nation's existence. Nevertheless, sometimes in a brief period we pass through the track of centuries. It is not so much the mere act of living that counts but what one does in this brief life that is ours; it is not so much the mere existence of a nation that counts but what that nation does during the various periods of its existence, and I do venture to claim that in the past quarter of a century or so India has lived and acted in a concentrated way and the emotions which have filled the people of India represent not merely a brief spell of years but something infinitely more. They have gone down into history and tradition and have added themselves on to that vast history and tradition which is our heritage in this country. So, when I move this resolution, I think of this concentrated history through which all of us have passed during the last quarter of a century. Memories crowd in upon me. I remember the ups and downs of the great struggle for freedom of this great nation. I remember and many in this House will remember how we looked up to this Flag not only with pride and enthusiasm but with a tingling in our veins; also how, when we were sometimes down and out, then again the sight of this Flag gave us courage to go on. Then, many who are present here today, many of our comrades who have passed, held on to this Flag, some amongst them even unto death and handed it over, as they sank, to others to hold it aloft. So in this simple form of words, there is much more than will be clear on the surface. There is the struggle of the people for freedom with all its ups and downs and trials and disasters and there is, finally today as I move this resolution, a certain triumph about it—a measure of triumph in the conclusion of that struggle.

Now, I realise fully, as this House must realise, that this triumph of ours has been marred in many ways. There have been, especially in the past few months, many happenings which cause us sorrow, which has gripped our hearts. We have seen parts of this dear motherland of ours cut off from the rest. We have seen large numbers of people suffering tremendously, large numbers wandering about like waifs and strays, without a home. We have seen many other things which I need not repeat to this House, but which we cannot forget. All this sorrow has dogged our footsteps. Even when we have achieved victory and triumph, it still dogs us and we have tremendous problems to face in the present and in the future. Nevertheless it is true I think—I hold it to be true—

that this moment does represent a triumph and a victorious conclusion of all our struggles, for the moment

There has been a very great deal of bewailing and moaning about various things that have happened. I am sad, all of us are sad, at heart because of those things. But let us distinguish that from the other fact of triumph, because there is triumph in victory, in what has happened. It is no small thing that that great and mighty empire which has represented imperialist domination in this country has decided to end its days here. That was the objective we aimed at

We have attained that objective or shall attain it very soon. Of that there is no doubt. We have not attained the objective exactly in the form in which we wanted it. The troubles and other things that accompanied our achievement are not to our liking. But we must remember that it is very seldom that people realise the dreams that they have dreamt. It is very seldom that the aims and objectives with which we start are achieved in their entirety in life, in an individual's life or in a nation's life.

We have many examples before us. We need not go into the distant past. We have examples in the present or in the recent past. Some years back, a great war was waged, a world war bringing terrible misery to mankind. That war was meant for freedom and democracy and the rest. The war ended in the triumph of those who said they stood for freedom and democracy. Yet, hardly had that war ended when there were rumours of fresh wars and fresh conflicts.

Three days ago, this House and this country and the world was shocked by the brutal murder in a neighbouring country of the leaders of the nation.<sup>3</sup> Today one reads in the papers of an attack by an imperialist power on a friendly country in South-East Asia.<sup>4</sup> Freedom is still far off in this world and nations, all nations in greater or lesser degree, are struggling for their freedom. If we in the present have not exactly achieved what we aimed at, it is not surprising. There is nothing in it to be ashamed of. For I do think our achievement is no small achievement. It is a very considerable achievement, a great achievement. Let no man run it down because other things have happened which are not to our liking. Let us keep these two things apart. Look at any country in the wide world. Where is the country today, including the great and big powers, which is not full of terrible problems, which is not in some way, politically and economically, striving for freedom which somehow or other eludes its grasp? The problems of India in the wider context do

3 Aung San, Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Burma, and four other ministers were assassinated on 19 July 1947.

4 On 21 July 1947, Batavia, the Capital of Indonesia, was bombed by Dutch planes.

not appear to be terrible. The problems are not anything new to us. We have faced many disagreeable things in the past. We have not held back. We shall face all the other disagreeable things that face us in the present or may do so in the future and we shall not flinch and we shall not falter and we shall not quit.

So, in spite of everything that surrounds us, it is in no spirit of downheartedness that I stand up in praise of this nation for what it has achieved. It is right and proper that at this moment we should adopt the symbol of this achievement, the symbol of freedom. Now what is this freedom in its entirety and for all humanity? What is freedom and what is the struggle for freedom and when does it end? As soon as you take one step forward and achieve something, further steps come up before you. There will be no full freedom in this country or in the world as long as a single human being is un-free. There will be no complete freedom as long as there is starvation, hunger, lack of clothing, lack of necessities of life and lack of opportunity of growth for every single human being, man, woman and child in the country. We aim at that. We may not accomplish that because it is a terrific task. But we shall do our utmost to accomplish that task and hope that our successors, when they come, will have an easier path to pursue. But there is no ending to that road to freedom. As we go ahead just as we sometimes in our vanity aim at perfection, perfection never comes. But if we try hard enough we do approach the goal step by step. When we increase the happiness of the people, we increase their stature in many ways and we proceed to our goal. I do not know if there is an end to this or not, but we proceed towards some kind of consummation which in effect never ends.

So I present this Flag to you. This resolution defines the Flag which I trust you will adopt. In a sense this Flag was adopted, not by a formal resolution, but by popular acclaim and usage, adopted much more by the sacrifice that surrounded it in the past few decades. We are in a sense only ratifying that popular adoption. It is a Flag which has been variously described. Some people, having misunderstood its significance, have thought of it in communal terms and believe that some part of it represents this community or that. But I may say that when this Flag was devised there was no communal significance attached to it. We thought of a design for a Flag which was beautiful, because the symbol of a nation must be beautiful to look at. We thought of a Flag which would in its combination and in its separate parts would somehow represent the spirit of the nation, the tradition of the nation, that mixed spirit and tradition which has grown up through thousands of years in India. So, we devised this Flag. Perhaps I am partial but I do think that

it is a very beautiful Flag to look at purely from the point of view of artistry, and it has come to symbolise many other beautiful things, things of the spirit, things of the mind, that give value to the individual's life and to the nation's life, for a nation does not live merely by material things, although they are highly important. It is important that we should have the good things of the world, the material possessions of the world, that our people should have; the necessities of life. That is of the utmost importance. Nevertheless, a nation, and especially a nation like India with an immemorial past, lives by other things also, the things of the spirit. If India had not been associated with these ideals and things of the spirit during these thousands of years, what would India have been? It has gone through a very great deal of misery and degradation in the past, but somehow even in the depths of degradation, the head of India has been held high, the thought of India has been high, and the ideals of India have been high. So we have gone through these tremendous ages and we stand up today in proud thankfulness for our past and even more so for the future that is to come for which we are going to work and for which our successors are going to work. It is our privilege and of those assembled here to mark the transition in a particular way, in a way that will be remembered.

I began by saying that it is my proud privilege to be ordered to move this resolution. Now, Sir, may I say a few words about this particular Flag? It will be seen that there is a slight variation from the one many of us have used during these past years. The colours are the same, a deep saffron, a white and a dark green. In the white previously there was the charkha which symbolised the common man in India, which symbolised the masses of the people, which symbolised their industry and which came to us from the message which Mahatma Gandhi delivered. Now, this particular charkha symbol has been slightly varied in this Flag, not taken away at all. Why then has this been varied? Normally speaking, the symbol on one side of the Flag should be exactly the same as on the other side. Otherwise, there is a difficulty which goes against the rules. Now, the charkha, as it appeared previously on the Flag, had the wheel on one side and the spindle on the other. If you see the other side of the Flag, the spindle comes the other way and the wheel comes this way; if it does not do so, it is not proportionate, because the wheel must be towards the pole, not towards the end of the Flag. There was this practical difficulty. Therefore, after considerable thought we were of course convinced that this great symbol which had enthused people should continue but that it should continue in a slightly different form, that the wheel should be there, not the rest of the charkha, that is the spindle and the string which created this confusion, that the essential

part of the charkha should be there, that is the wheel. So, the old tradition continues in regard to the charkha and the wheel. But what type of wheel should we have? Our minds went back to many wheels but notably one famous wheel, which had appeared in many places and which all of us have seen, the one at the top of the capital of the Asoka column and in many other places. That wheel is a symbol of India's ancient culture, it is a symbol of the many things that India had stood for through the ages. So we thought that this *chakra* emblem should be there and that wheel appears. For my part, I am exceedingly happy that in this sense indirectly we have associated with this Flag of ours not only this emblem but in a sense the name of Asoka, one of the most magnificent names not only in India's history but in world history. It is well that at this moment of strife, conflict and intolerance, our minds should go back towards what India stood for in the ancient days and what it has stood for, I hope and believe, essentially throughout the ages in spite of mistakes and errors and degradations from time to time. For, if India had not stood for something very great, I do not think that India could have survived and carried on its cultural traditions in a more or less continuous manner through these vast ages. It carried on its cultural tradition, not unchanging, not rigid, but always keeping its essence, always adapting itself to new developments, to new influences. That has been the tradition of India, always to put out fresh blooms and flowers, always receptive to the good things that it received, sometimes receptive to bad things also, but always true to her ancient culture. All manner of new influences through thousands of years have influenced us, while we influenced them tremendously also, for you will remember that India has not been in the past a tight little narrow country, disdaining other countries. India throughout the long ages of her history has been connected with other countries, not only connected with other countries, but has been an international centre, sending out her people abroad to far off countries carrying her message and receiving the message of other countries in exchange, but India was strong enough to remain embedded on the foundations on which she was built, although changes, many changes, have taken place. The strength of India, it has been said, consists in this strong foundation. It consists also in its amazing capacity to receive, to adapt what it wants to adapt, not to reject because something is outside its scope, but to accept and receive everything. It is folly for any nation or race to think that it can only give to and not receive from the rest of the world. Once a nation or a race begins to think like that, it becomes rigid, it becomes ungrowing; it grows backwards and decays. In fact, if India's history can be traced, India's periods of decay are those when it closed herself up into a shell and refused to



receive or to look at the outside world. India's greatest periods are those when she stretched her hands to others in far off countries, sent her emissaries, ambassadors, her trade agents and merchants to these countries and received ambassadors and emissaries from abroad.

Now because I have mentioned the name of Asoka I should like you to think that the Asokan period in Indian history was essentially an international period of Indian history. It was not a narrowly national period. It was a period when India's ambassadors went abroad to far countries and went abroad not in the way of an empire and imperialism but as ambassadors of peace and culture and goodwill.

Therefore this Flag that I have the honour to present to you is not, I hope and trust, a Flag of empire, a Flag of imperialism, a Flag of domination over anybody, but a Flag of freedom not only for ourselves, but a symbol of freedom to all people who may see it. And wherever it may go—and I hope it will go far,—not only where Indians dwell as our ambassadors and ministers but across the far seas where it may be carried by Indian ships, wherever it may go it will bring a message, I hope, of freedom to those people, a message of comradeship, a message that India wants to be friends with every country of the world and India wants to help any people who seek freedom. That I hope will be the message of this Flag everywhere and I hope that in the freedom that is coming to us, we will not do what many other people or some other people have unfortunately done, that is, in a new found strength suddenly to expand and become imperialistic in design. If that happened that would be a terrible ending to our struggle for freedom. But there is that danger and, therefore, I venture to remind this House of it—although this House needs no reminder—there is this danger in a country suddenly unshackled in stretching out its arms and legs and trying to hit out at other people. And if we do that we become just like other nations who seem to live in a kind of succession of conflicts and preparation for conflict. That is the world today unfortunately.

In some degree I have been responsible for the foreign policy during the past few months and always the question is asked here or elsewhere: "What is your foreign policy? To what group do you adhere to in this warring world?" Right at the beginning I venture to say that we propose to belong to no power group. We propose to function as far as we can as peace-makers and peace-bringers because today we are not strong enough to be able to have our way. But at any rate we propose to avoid all entanglements with power politics in the world. It is not completely possible to do that in this complicated world of ours, but certainly we are going to do our utmost to that end.

It is stated in this resolution that the ratio of the width to the length

of the Flag shall ordinarily be 2 : 3. Now you will notice the word "ordinarily". There is no absolute standard about the ratio because the same Flag on a particular occasion may have a certain ratio that might be more suitable or on any other occasion in another place the ratio might differ slightly. So there is no compulsion about this ratio. But generally speaking, the ratio of 2.3 is a proper ratio. Sometimes the ratio 2:1 may be suitable for a flag flying on a building. Whatever the ratio may be, the point is not so much the relative length and breadth, but the essential design.

So, Sir, now I would present to you not only the resolution but the Flag itself.

There are two of these National Flags before you. One is on silk—the one I am holding — and the other on the other side is of cotton khadi.

I beg to move this resolution.

#### 10. To J.B. Kripalani<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
23 July 1947

My dear President,

I am very sorry at my inability to attend the party meeting to be held at 6 this evening. As I am in charge of the Union Constitution report, it was my special duty to attend the meeting when this was being considered. Unfortunately I have got rather important engagements just at that time which will take me to about 8 o'clock or even later, and I cannot postpone these engagements. May I request you to convey my apologies to the meeting?

2. There is one matter which has been troubling me greatly. As Chairman of the Union Constitution Committee, I have naturally to place the report of that committee and to stand by it. The committee considered the matter at considerable length and came to certain conclusions, often enough unanimously. Now if any vital change is made in the party meeting to this report, I am placed in a somewhat false position. On the one hand I am supposed to carry out the party mandate, on the other hand, as a member and Chairman of my committee, I have to hold to their

1. J.N. Papers, N M M L

decisions. If in addition I myself am strongly of opinion that the committee's decision is the right one, then it becomes still more difficult for me to oppose that decision. As the person in charge of the motion, I cannot remain silent. I have to say something this way or that way. This, of course, normally applies to important and vital matters only.

3. It may so happen that because of a party decision on a vital matter by a relatively small majority, the decision of the Constituent Assembly might be ultimately a minority decision. In a matter of framing the constitution and the fundamental law of the nation it seems to me very undesirable that there should be the possibility of such minority decisions. An additional difficulty is created by the fact that some of us are in charge of Government and might continue to be so. The responsibility, therefore, has to be shouldered by us even though the decision is not in conformity with our own ideas, and we cannot, therefore, say anything in favour of it.

4. The obvious course seems to me to be for those who are in line with these decisions to shoulder this responsibility and give effect to them. Of course we must abide by any decision of the Constituent Assembly. What troubles me is that owing to some decision of the party meeting we are not even able to put forward our viewpoint before the Constituent Assembly and the final decision of the Assembly is not really a majority decision on merits. This kind of thing is likely to produce an unfavourable impression in the country.

5. An incident happened today which bears on this difficulty. In the discussion on the Governor's powers, the mover of the motion, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, had given expression to his views right at the beginning. In accordance with that and in accordance with the joint decision of the Union Constitution Committee and the Provincial Constitution Committee, an amendment was tabled by Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant. The party, however, decided against it and Pandit Pant did not move the amendment himself. But in the course of the discussion his name was brought forward and he felt it incumbent on himself to express his own viewpoint. Some of us at least entirely agreed with that viewpoint. But we remained silent. This procedure seems to me somehow not to be the right one.

6. I realise fully that it is desirable for the party to hold together and work as a unified group. At the same time it seems to me essential that vital matters should not be disposed of as if they were party issues. We

are moving in a larger plane now and have the responsibility of carrying the country, with us. We have, therefore, to devise some method of keeping party discipline in so far as possible and at the same time to allow latitude in the Constituent Assembly for an important subject to be fully considered and for members to express their views upon it with freedom. I am placing this difficulty of mine before you so that you might kindly place it before the party meeting and arrive at some solution. The difficulty is enhanced if any decision seems to go contrary to Congress resolutions and practice to which we have been bound for so long

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 11. The Qualification of Age for the President<sup>1</sup>

I beg to move that Clause 3 be adopted. It runs as follows:

Every citizen of the Federation who has completed the age of thirty-five years and is qualified for election as a member of the House of the People shall be eligible for election as President

This is a very simple proposition and I do not think any argument is needed to support. It has been believed that a person who has not achieved much by the age of 35 is not going to do much later. Nevertheless, normally speaking in India, and more especially in other places, men up to 35 sometimes do not even get a chance to achieve much. Others hold the field. In any case, the age 35 is not a high limit. I think it is a fair limit. It means that a person who is chosen shall have at least a dozen years or so of experience. I think it is therefore a fairly safe age for debarring the candidates. I hope the House will accept the Clause.

(At this point H V. Kamath sought a clarification as to whether "reached the age of 35 years", the phrase used in the Provincial Constitution, and "completed the age of 35 years" meant the same )

1 Speech in the Constituent Assembly, 24 July 1947 *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol IV, 1947, p 854

I am sorry I did not hear a word of what Mr. Kamath said. Anyway I am not responsible for the Provincial Constitution. I consider this a better wording. To say 'completed', means definitely what it says. What the other wording means I do not know.<sup>2</sup>

- 2 Thakur Das Bhargava, Rajkrushna Bose and H.V. Kamath withdrew their amendments, and Clause 3 was adopted.

## 12. The President's Term and Provision for Impeachment<sup>1</sup>

Sir, I beg to move:

(1) The President shall hold office for five years. Provided that—  
(a) a President may by resignation under his hand addressed to the Chairman of the Council of States and the Speaker of the House of the People resign his office,

(b) a President may for violation of the Constitution be removed from office by impeachment in the manner provided in sub-clause (2).

(2) (a) When a President is to be impeached for violation of the Constitution the charge shall be preferred by either House of the Federal Parliament but no proposal to prefer such charge shall be adopted by that House except upon a resolution of the House supported by not less than two-thirds of the total membership of the House.

(b) When a charge has been so preferred by either House of the Federal Parliament the other House shall investigate the charge or cause the charge to be investigated and the President shall have the right to appear and to be represented at such investigation.

(c) If as a result of the investigation a resolution is passed supported by not less than two-thirds of the total membership of the House by which the charge was investigated or caused to be investigated declaring that the charge preferred against the President

1. Speech in the Constituent Assembly, 24 July 1947. *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol IV, 1947, pp. 848-849.

has been sustained, the resolution shall have the effect of removing the President from his office as from the date of resolution.

(3) A person who holds or who has held office as President shall be eligible for re-election once but only once.

There are, Sir, we might say, three parts of this resolution; one relating to the term of office—five years. Now, this is not a matter of high principle, but after consideration we thought five years will be a suitable term. Four will be too little and more than five certainly too much. The rest of it deals mostly with the impeachment of the President. And lastly, this clause says that a person can only hold office twice, that is to say, not only twice successively, or consecutively, but twice altogether. That means, no man can be President for more than ten years altogether in his life. The question, as is well known, has often been discussed in the United States of America, and, normally speaking, nobody was supposed to be President beyond the second term. In the course of the last war, of course, President Roosevelt actually went into the fourth term, but, as a matter of fact, ten years is about as much as any normal human constitution can bear this heavy burden. Presumably, when a person becomes President, he will not be too young. He may be in the late forties or fifties and I think it is not right for a person to be asked to assume this burden beyond ten years. President Roosevelt, under the stress of circumstances, carried on for the fourth term, but he only carried on for two or three months after his election. So I submit that this rule about not holding office more than twice is a good rule and we should adhere to it.

For the rest, I have little more to say. In case there are amendments, I shall deal with them at the end of the debate.

### 13. The Emoluments of the President<sup>1</sup>

Sir, a great deal has been said about the emoluments of the President. It seems to me that it is very difficult to make lists of offices which he should not hold. Only a general principle can be laid down and carefully no doubt, but subsequently the rest depends a great deal on convention

<sup>1</sup> Speech in the Constituent Assembly, 24 July 1947. *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol IV, 1947, pp 863-864

If you start making long lists, it means that there may be many things left out which he can do. So, normally speaking, one will have to depend upon convention. The point is that he should not be actively connected or associated with the management of any gainful office. Obviously, in the modern world, if he is at all well-to-do, he will have some shares or like Mr. Sri Prakasa he may be a landholder or he may have some other property. There is no chance as far as I can see of Mr. Sri Prakasa being prevented from standing for the Presidentship and I would deem it a calamity if it were so. So I submit that at this moment one need not go further into this question but leave it as it is,—and not only for the drafting but for the convention to grow up.

In one matter I am inclined to agree with what Mr. Santhanam said,<sup>2</sup> although I do not think it is necessary to put it down, and that is that any person in high responsible office should make some kind of disclosure of his connections with business and of his holdings, etc. I think there would be an advantage in that, whether he is a President or whether he is a Minister or any other person in high responsible office. I accept, Sir, the amendment moved by Sir N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar, which clarifies sub-clause(1).<sup>3</sup>

There is the question I believe of the emoluments and allowances of the President. A suggestion has been made<sup>4</sup> that some other word should be used instead of “diminished”. After consideration we came to the conclusion that “diminished” was the right word. We could use “varied” or “increased or diminished” but on the whole “diminished” was considered the best. The point is that the legislature has in its power to do anything it chooses, but it must not exercise its power to the detriment of the person who has been chosen the President. There is no question of increasing his allowances or emoluments unless the Parliament so desires. You need not check Parliament doing anything, but there is the slight danger possibly of Parliament or the people making the position of the President impossible. Therefore you say it should not be “diminished”.

2 K Santhanam had said that the provisions regarding the President holding any office of emoluments should be carefully drafted in the final constitution and that he should declare his wealth on assuming office

3 N Gopalaswami Ayyangar's amendment provided that the President should not be a member of either the Federal or a Provincial Legislature and should, if he be a member, vacate his seat on his election to the office of President

4 Sub-clause (4) of clause 4 stated that the emoluments and allowances of the President shall not be diminished during his term of office. An amendment to substitute the word 'altered' for 'diminished' was moved by K T M Ahmed Ibrahim

In these days, one does not quite know, suddenly there might be inflation and it may affect the situation so much that all normal standards of salaries and allowances might have to change. So I don't think any change is needed there.

Last of all, the amendment moved in regard to the President not being a party man—now, I don't know, but certainly I have a certain sneaking sympathy with such a proposition.<sup>5</sup> But in spite of that it seems to me completely impractical. What is a party man? No doubt, one thinks in terms of the huge party machines running political elections. But it is almost impossible for you to advise all of them. There are all kinds of parties and a person does not become bad because he belongs to a small party or a big party. Everybody is associated, I am afraid, with some group or association. The point is that the President should not function as a party man after he is elected. That, on the whole, is so. I am not myself clear in my own mind as to what his relation to the party he belongs to should be after his election. However, the question does not arise. But, in any event, he should function as anyone should function, whether he is a party man or not, completely impartially when he is in high office. So, Sir, I regret I am unable to accept any amendment except Sir N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar's.

- 5 Ram Narayan Singh's amendment that "the President must not be a party man" was withdrawn

#### 14. A Five-Year Term for the President<sup>1</sup>

There are two amendments moved to this clause neither of which raises any question of high policy; the last one especially stresses an obvious thing. It is impossible, practically speaking, for a President removed from office to stand for re-election.<sup>2</sup> I do not imagine any high principles are involved in this. We are dealing with important matters. If something else has to be done about it, it will be done later.

1. Speech in the Constituent Assembly, 21 July 1947 *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol. IV, 1947, pp. 852-853
2. Swaminandan Sahaya's amendment to debar any person who had once been removed from the office of the President from being eligible for re-election was withdrawn



As regards the amendment concerning the term of years, that too is not a matter of big policy.<sup>3</sup> We fixed this period for various reasons into which I need not go now, one of them being not to just fit in with the four-year period of the other elections. Now, many members seem to think that, while the elections to the provincial and other legislatures will take place once in four years, this alone will take place every five years and that after some time it may so happen that the electors will be rather old in the sense of being elected three or four years previously. Well, it may be that the five-year period for the President will be a fixed term unless the President dies or is impeached or something happens to him. But, so far as the other provincial, etc. elections are concerned it is obvious and it is highly likely that the four-year period will not be strictly adhered to. Elections will necessarily have to be held from time to time. Something may happen; the Ministry might change; it might lose the confidence of the House and so many other things may happen and there will be so many of the provincial legislatures that you cannot say at any time that the membership has remained constant without a change. Membership of the legislatures will be changing from year to year or from quarter to quarter so that this objection that the "Rashtapati" will be chosen by an electorate which itself has been chosen several years previously does not hold at all. There will be a changing electorate all the time and the four-year period is only the maximum period. The electorate may remain unchanged for one year or 6 months and fresh election will take place as it now does. I submit therefore that, in the balance, the five-year period is better.

- 3 Mahomed Sherif and DH Chandrasekharaiya sought to reduce the term of the President's office from five years to four.

## 15. The Mode of Electing the President<sup>1</sup>

Mr. President, there are many amendments. But the greatest emphasis has been laid on one point: the election of the President on the basis of adult franchise, i.e. everybody should take part in the election.<sup>2</sup> Another

1 Speech in the Constituent Assembly, 24 July 1947 *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol. IV, 1947, pp 845-847.

2 Shibbanlal Saxena proposed that the President be elected directly by the people on the basis of adult suffrage.



PRESENTING THE NATIONAL FLAG TO THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY,  
22 JULY 1947



WITH LORD MOUNTBATTEN AND RAJENDRA PRASAD, 14-15 AUGUST 1947

amendment is that the word "Rashtrapati" should be substituted by the word *Neta or Karandhar*.<sup>3</sup> Still another amendment is that the President should be elected alternatively from the North and the South.<sup>4</sup> Again, there is an amendment which says that the members of the Upper Houses also should take part in the Presidential election.<sup>5</sup> There is yet another amendment, but I do not know whether it has been moved or not. According to this amendment, the President should be elected from the States and non-States portion of the Indian Republic (by rotation) alternately. Lastly, there is an amendment which deals with the oath of allegiance.<sup>6</sup>

I regret very much that I cannot accept any of these amendments except the one proposing that the word "member" should be substituted by "elected member"<sup>7</sup> though the word "elected" is not a definite improvement. The draft would have thoroughly clarified the point: but in spite of this, if you wish to add the word "elected", I am ready to accept it. Something has been said about the oath also. It is obvious that it will figure in the Constitution. At this stage, it does not seem necessary.

So far as the question of the election of the President, from the North and the South and from the States or non-States units is concerned, it seems to be wrong in principle. It is not desirable that we elect the President, once from one class and the next time from the other, and framing of rules and statutory provisions for this purpose is highly undesirable.

In answer to the query, as to why members of the Upper Houses should not take part in the Presidential election, I submit that there will be much difference between the Upper Houses of the States units and those of the provinces I cannot say which of the units will have an Upper House. Another point is that the States and the provinces will have different standards. Nobody knows what principles the States and the provinces will adopt. If this right is conceded to the Upper Houses it will create confusion. Therefore, in my opinion the proposition is correct that in the Centre, both the Houses shall have the right to take

3. This amendment was suggested by Gokulbhai D. Bhatt.

4. Moved by T. Channiah

5. Syamanandan Sahaya proposed that the words in sub-clause (2) of Clause 1 "or where a legislature is bicameral, the members of the Lower House thereof" be deleted

6. D.H. Chandrasekharaiya moved that "the President shall be alternately elected from the State and the non-State Units", and that provision be made for the President to take the oath of office as in the constitution of the United States of America.

7. The amendment that for the words "the members" wherever they occurred, the words "the elected members" be substituted was moved by K. Chengalaraya Reddy.

part in the Presidential election, and in the units only the Lower Houses. There is a complexity which has not been clarified, i.e., whether the units will have greater rights than the Centre, whether the members of the Central Legislature will have one vote or more to balance the voting strength of units. It is for our advisers to make this point clear. Therefore, for the present, in my opinion, as I have already stated and as has already been printed, it should be left as it is. I have already stated in the beginning, and I repeat it once again and if you, too, reflect over it, you will arrive at the same conclusion, that it is best to leave this choice unfettered. I am not prepared to believe that adult franchise is absolutely essential. Obviously, the number of those who will elect the members of the Assembly will be in millions and they are expected to be proper persons. Therefore, when the members of the Assembly themselves are being elected by votes of millions where is the necessity for electing the President by adult franchise? Therefore if you desire to frame and promulgate your Constitution without necessary delay, then we should avoid complications; otherwise we will not be able to frame our Constitution in the least possible time, and act on it.

If you want to elect the President by adult franchise, then this would mean that we will have to waste much of our time in holding (Presidential) elections and we will not be able to act according to our new Constitution. Therefore, it is my desire that this resolution should be accepted in the form I have put before you

Mahomed Sherif: When you accept the principle of nomination why do you not accept this amendment also?

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JN: The question of my accepting or rejecting nomination is not an issue. I accept that particular type of nomination which is recorded herein, that is to say, nominees of units and "scientific bodies" should be taken.<sup>8</sup> This is not the question. I have already said that the President should be elected by the votes of the elected members.

8 This clause read: "The Council of State shall consist of—

(1) not more than 10 members nominated by the President in consultation with Universities and scientific bodies"

16. To Rajendra Prasad<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
27 July 1947

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I have your letter of the 27th July about the Flag. I quite agree with you that flags made for governmental purposes should be of khadi, either cotton or silk. Various Government departments and Provincial Governments should be informed of this.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

1 Rajendra Prasad Papers, National Archives of India

17. The Mode of Appointment of Prime Minister and Council of Ministers<sup>1</sup>

This is a very simple clause, Sir:

10. There shall be a council of ministers, with the Prime Minister at the head, to aid and advise the President in the exercise of his functions.

I beg to move this.

\* \* \* \*

Sir, I venture to intervene in order to make clear which of the amendments I am prepared to accept and which not. Four amendments have been moved. I may say at the outset that I am prepared to accept Sir Gopalaswami Ayyangar's amendment<sup>2</sup> and not the others. Pandit Bhargava's amendment is more or less the same; it is only a question of wording. The others raise entirely different issues; for instance, the issue

1. Speech in the Constituent Assembly, 28 July 1947. *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol IV, 1947, pp. 907, 915-916.

2. Gopalaswami Ayyangar's amendment read: "That at the end of Clause 10, the following be added: 'The Prime Minister shall be appointed by the President and the other Ministers shall be appointed by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister. The Council shall be collectively responsible to the House of the People'"

of ministers being elected by proportional representation.<sup>3</sup> I can think of nothing more conducive to creating a feeble ministry and a feeble government than this business of electing them by proportional representation; and I would therefore like the House to reject this amendment.

The other one raises a completely different issue, as to what the nature of the constitution should be. For instance, Mr. Karimuddin's<sup>4</sup> amendment says that "the executive of the Union shall be non-parliamentary, in the sense that it should not be removable before the term of the legislature," etc. That raises a very fundamental issue of what form you are going to give to your constitution, the ministerial parliamentary type or the American type. So far we have been proceeding with the building up of the constitution in the ministerial sense and I do submit that we cannot go back upon it and it will upset the whole scheme and structure of the constitution. Therefore I regret I cannot accept this amendment of Mr. Karimuddin or of Mr. Pocker Sahib.<sup>5</sup>

As to the other point raised it is perfectly true that the original draft that I placed before the House was not at all clear on various matters. It was not clear because there was no intention of drafting it here. These are certain indications for future drafting and some things were obviously taken for granted. It was taken for granted that the Prime Minister would be sent for by the President because he happens to represent the largest party or group in the House; further that the Prime Minister would select his ministers and further that they would be responsible to the House collectively. All that was taken for granted, but perhaps it is better to put that down clearly and the amendment moved by Sir Gopalaswami Ayyangar puts that down very clearly. Therefore I accept that amendment and I hope the House also will accept it and reject the others.<sup>6</sup>

3. This amendment read: "There shall be a Council of Ministers elected by the National Assembly by a system of proportional representation by single transferable vote, and the Council of Ministers shall be responsible to the National Assembly."
4. Kazi Syed Karimuddin, a member of the Legislative Assembly of the Central Provinces and Berar, was nominated to the Constituent Assembly by the Muslim League
5. B. Pocker, a member of the Madras Legislative Assembly, was nominated to the Constituent Assembly by the Muslim League.
- 6 Gopalaswami Ayyangar's amendment was adopted

18. To Rajendra Prasad<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
4 August 1947

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I am anxious that the programme for the 14th night and for the 15th morning sessions of the Constituent Assembly should be very carefully fixed with every detail noted. If this is not done, certain confusion may arise or objections might be taken.

2. For the midnight session I suggest .

- (1) *Vande Mataram* song, first stanza, sung by a member of the Assembly (either Sucheta Kripalani or someone else)—the person to be informed and prepared.
- (2) Speech by President of the C A.
- (3) Two minutes' silence, standing, in memory of those who have died in the struggle for freedom in India and elsewhere
- (4) Choice of Leader.
- (5) Resolution asking the Leader to convey a message to the Governor-General.
- (6) Speech by Leader.
- (7) Iqbal's song—*Sare Jahan se Achcha*—one or two stanzas.  
Adjournment of the Assembly till next morning.

3. You will notice that I have mentioned two minutes' silence. I think this is desirable and necessary. The resolution should be carefully drafted. The singer of Iqbal's song should also be previously chosen and prepared. He should be a member of the Assembly.

4 I think all these proceedings should not take more than 40 minutes, perhaps 30

*15th Morning Session*

- (1) Speech by the Governor-General and reading out of any declaration.
- (2) Speech by President of the C.A.
- (3) Departure of the Governor-General and adjournment of the Assembly.

5 It is for you to consider whether after the departure of the Viceroy and before the adjournment some further speeches may be allowed.

<sup>1</sup> J N Papers, N.M.M.L.



6. I do not think there should be any singing on this occasion.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

# 19. To H.V.R. Iengar<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
5th August 1947

My dear Iengar,

Tarlok Singh has shown me the draft programme for the night of 14th August which you had sent him. I think 11.30 is about the right time to begin. It just depends on whether the President wants many speeches on the resolution or not. If he wants several speeches, then, perhaps, we should start earlier. In any event, I think 11.15 is good enough

I should like to consider the terms of the resolution and the pledge more carefully.

As for the songs, I think the three songs to be sung should be *Vande Mataram*, *Sare Jahan Se Achcha Hindustan Hamara* and *Janaganamana*; only the first stanzas of each I do not think *Jhanda Uncha Rahe Hamara* is an appropriate song at that time or place. Songs should be sung by some member of the Assembly who should be prepared carefully, and there should be rehearsal previously.

I suggest the following programme

1. Singing of first verse of *Vande Mataram*,
2. Brief speech by the President;
3. Two minutes' silence, standing, in memory of all those who have died in the struggle for freedom in India and elsewhere;
4. Resolution;  
(All these to take place before midnight.)
5. Immediately on the stroke of midnight the pledge to be taken by the members of the Constituent Assembly;
6. Resolution of the Constituent Assembly electing a Leader and asking him to convey their message to the Governor-General;
7. Singing of first few lines of *Sare Jahan Se Achcha*;
8. Singing of first verse of *Janaganamana*.

The proceedings should end at 12.30.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Constituent Assembly of India, Constitution Section, File No CA 111/Cons/47, Ministry of Law, Government of India

**20. To H.V.R. Iengar<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
12 August 1947

My dear Iengar,

In the form of pledge that has been prescribed for members of the Constituent Assembly, it is stated: "I, . . . . ., a member of the Constituent Assembly of India, do dedicate myself to the service of India and her people to the end that this ancient land attain her rightful and honoured place in the world and make her full and willing contribution to the promotion of world peace and welfare of mankind".

It seems to me that probably "its" before "rightful" and before "full" should be "her". This sounds better.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 Constituent Assembly of India, Constitution Section, File No. CA 111/Cons/47, Ministry of Law, Government of India

## THE TRANSFER OF POWER

**1. Letter from the Congress President to Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
2 June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

The Congress Working Committee have considered the statement<sup>2</sup> which H.M.G. propose to make tomorrow and a copy of which you were good enough to give me this morning.

2. The proposals contained in this statement are of far reaching importance and affect the whole future of India. These envisage the possibility of certain parts of India seceding from the rest.

3. As you know, the Congress has consistently upheld that the unity of India should be maintained. Ever since its inception, the Congress has worked towards the realisation of a free and united India. Any proposal, therefore, which might bring about separation of a part of India from the rest is painful to contemplate and, in the opinion of the Congress, is harmful to all the parties concerned. Such a proposal would normally have to be considered by the All India Congress Committee. The Working Committee would make its recommendations to that Committee, but the final decision would rest with the All India Congress Committee, or the full session of the Congress itself.

4. We have realized, however, that in the peculiar and abnormal situation of today it is not possible to delay matters and decisions have to be reached rapidly. There has been far too much uncertainty in the country and this has led to instability and to violence on a large scale

1. Drafted by Nehru *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 11, pp 66-68

2. On 3 June 1947 the British Government announced that they proposed "to introduce legislation during the current session for the transfer of power this year on a Dominion status basis to one or two successor authorities" without prejudice to the right of the Indian Constituent Assemblies to decide whether or not the part of India in respect of which they had authority would remain within the British Commonwealth. The possibility of the partition of India was also envisaged and the M.L.A.s of Bengal and the Punjab were to decide whether these provinces would be partitioned. A notional partition or provisional boundaries were also indicated. Later two Boundary Commissions were to be set up for a detailed investigation of boundary questions. In case the Punjab was partitioned the NWFP would be given an opportunity to reconsider its position by holding a referendum to decide whether its constitution would be framed in the existing Constituent Assembly or in a new and separate Constituent Assembly. Sind and British Baluchistan were also given the right to take their own decisions on these alternatives.

We have also appreciated that the negotiations that have been going on for some time between you and Indian leaders had of necessity to be secret.

5. My Committee considered the principles underlying the present proposals about a month ago and generally accepted them. This acceptance was conveyed to you in paragraph 12 of the letter dated 1st May 1947 which Shri Jawaharlal Nehru wrote to you <sup>3</sup>

6. As we have stated on many occasions, we accepted in its entirety the Cabinet Mission's Statement of 16th May 1946 as well as the subsequent interpretation thereof dated 6th December 1946. We have indeed been acting in accordance with it and the Constituent Assembly which was formed, in terms of the Cabinet Mission's plan has been functioning for nearly six months. We are still prepared to adhere to that plan. In view, however, of subsequent events and the situation today, we are willing to accept as a variation of that plan the proposals now being made.

7. I do not wish to enter into any detailed examination of the proposed statement of H M G. It has been produced after considerable consultation and I am desirous to say by my Committee that we are prepared to accept it and to recommend to the All India Congress Committee to do likewise. We do so in the earnest hope that this will mean a settlement. We feel that the situation in India, political and economic, as well as communal, demands more than ever a peaceful approach to all our problems. These problems cannot be solved by methods of violence, and there can be no submission to such methods.

8. While we are willing to accept the proposals made by H M G., my Committee desire to emphasize that they are doing so in order to achieve a final settlement. This is dependent on the acceptance of the proposals by the Muslim League and a clear understanding that no further claims will be put forward. There has been enough misunderstanding in the past and in order to avoid this in the future it is necessary to have explicit statements in writing in regard to those proposals.

9. We believe as fully as ever in a united India. The unity we aim at is not that of compulsion but of friendship and cooperation. We earnestly trust that when present passions have subsided our problems will be viewed in their proper perspective and a willing union of all parts of India will result therefrom.

<sup>3</sup> See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 2, pp 106-112.

10. There are some matters, however, to which I should like to draw your attention. My Committee realise that the proposals being put forward may result in injury to the Sikhs unless great care is taken and their peculiar position in the Punjab is fully appreciated. We are aware that H.M.G. and you are anxious to protect all legitimate Sikh interests. The matter will have to be considered by the Boundary Commission provided for as we earnestly trust that all other factors, apart from population, will be taken fully into consideration. The Sikhs have played a vital role in developing a considerable part of the Punjab. They have been pioneers in the canal areas and have converted by their labours the desert into the richest part of the Punjab. It has been made clear in the document that the notional partition is of a purely temporary character and the final boundaries will be determined by the Boundary Commission.

11. In the last sentence of paragraph 9 it is stated that "until the report of the Boundary Commission has been put into effect, the provisional boundary as indicated in the appendix will be used" It is not quite clear to what this refers and what the use will be. It is well known that the notional division ignores other important factors and that the Sikhs are distressed by it.<sup>4</sup> If any further use is made of this notional division for administrative or other purposes, this will inevitably affect the final division and will give rise to a great deal of apprehension in the minds of the Sikhs. We would, therefore, urge you not to apply that notional division for any administrative purpose during the interim period. This would be in keeping with the spirit of the document and with what you conveyed to us this morning.

12. In paragraph 11 of the statement reference is made to a referendum in the N.W.F. Province. There has been a growing demand in the province for independence and subsequent decision as to their relation with the rest of India. The referendum should also provide for this

13. In paragraph 20 of the statement, which we are told is an addition to the original draft, the last sentence refers to the right of the Constituent Assemblies to decide in due course whether or not India or any part of it will remain within the British Commonwealth. It seems to us extremely undesirable and likely to lead to friction if the relations of Bri-

4 The basis of the notional division was between the Muslim and the non-Muslim populations. In the appendix to the statement a list of the Muslim majority districts of Bengal and the Punjab according to the 1941 census was given.

tain with the Indian Union and the seceding parts of it are on a differential basis. We should, therefore, like to make it clear that we cannot be consenting parties to any such development.

14. In view of the importance of the proposals and decisions being made, my Committee intend to convene a meeting of the All India Congress Committee at an early date. They propose to recommend the acceptance generally of the statement of H.M.G. as a settlement of our political and communal problems

Yours sincerely,  
J.B. Kripalani

## 2. Mountbatten's Discussions with Indian Leaders<sup>1</sup>

### I

No. 1284-S. My telegram 1277-S. Congress point contained in paragraph 5<sup>2</sup> seemed to me so dangerous that it might well have wrecked the whole chance of agreement, since it was clear that Congress wanted H.M.G. to give an assurance that Pakistan would be expelled from the Commonwealth if the rest of India wished to secede.

2. V.P. Menon...rushed round to Patel and pointed out that H.M.G. could never be expected to agree to such a proposal which negatives the whole principle of Dominion Status, and urged him to drop it.

3. I sent for Nehru half an hour before the meeting and told him the same thing. I told him that I did not even intend to mention at the meeting that this suggestion had been made. Both Patel and Nehru agreed to this course.

1. 2 June 1947. Here are printed three reports. The first two reports of the talk held with Nehru and Patel before the commencement of the meeting are found in Mountbatten's telegram to the Secretary of State dated 3 June 1947 and in Viceroy's Personal Report dated 5 June 1947, printed in *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 11, pp 104-105 and p 162 respectively. The third report is in the minutes of the meeting printed in *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 45-47

2 See the preceding item, para. 13.

4. In the Congress letter the following paragraph also appeared: "In paragraph 11 of the Statement reference is made to a referendum in the N.W.F. Province. There has been a growing demand in the province for independence and subsequent decision as to their relation with the rest of India. The referendum should also provide for this." V.P. Menon pointed out to Patel and I pointed out to Nehru that since it was at Nehru's own request that I had dropped the original proposal to allow every province to vote for Pakistan, Hindustan or independence, they could hardly expect me to reintroduce it at this stage. Nehru quite openly admitted that the N.W.F.P. could not possibly stand by itself, and it became clear to me that this was a device to free Khan Sahib's party from the odium of being connected with Congress during the referendum period, since Nehru spoke about Khan Sahib wishing to join the Union of India at a subsequent stage. I told Nehru I had no intention of raising this at the meeting, and he accepted my ruling on this.

5. He also asked that the referendum should be based on adult franchise. I told him that this was quite impracticable in the time available, and rejected it.

## II

22. I called an early morning meeting of my staff to discuss the two main objections raised by Congress, and I despatched V.P. Menon to see Patel, and invited Nehru to come at 9.30 a.m. to see me before the meeting.

23. The line I took about these two points with Nehru was as follows:—

(a) The Congress request to allow the N.W.F.P. referendum to include a third choice—for independence—could not be accepted unless the Muslim League leaders agreed to it, which Nehru admitted was out of the question. I further pointed out that it was at Nehru's own request that I had removed the choice of independence in the case of Bengal and other provinces to avoid "Balkanisation". I expressed surprise that he should have been a party to such a manoeuvre, the more so since he admitted that this province could not stand on its own, and would eventually have to join up with one side or the other in any case.

(b) The last sentence of the new paragraph 20 produced a strong reaction.

This reads as follows:—

This will be without prejudice to the right of the Indian Constituent Assemblies to decide in due course whether or not the part of India



in respect of which, they have authority will remain within the British Commonwealth.

It may be remembered that this was the sentence which I thought in London might give trouble and which I had favoured omitting. Nehru began by saying he did not doubt my sincerity or that of His Majesty's Government, but that this sentence drew attention to the fact that Pakistan would be allowed to remain within the Commonwealth even if Hindustan wished to withdraw. I pointed out that what the sentence really drew attention to was the fact that either side could withdraw whenever they liked. Nehru replied "But everybody knows that; why did you have to draw public attention to the fact that one side could stay in if the other side withdraws?"

I replied that this was done from motives of honesty. He argued that His Majesty's Government could not be a party to allowing Pakistan to remain in the Empire if Hindustan wished eventually to withdraw. I pointed out that His Majesty's Government did not run the Commonwealth; that all the States in it were free and equal partners; and that the only method open to him for getting Pakistan out would be either by persuading them to withdraw at the same time as Hindustan, or raising the matter at a Commonwealth conference and getting the other Dominions to agree to this course. Finally I told him that I had no intention of raising such a controversial matter which would only infuriate Mr. Jinnah. We then went into the meeting.

### III

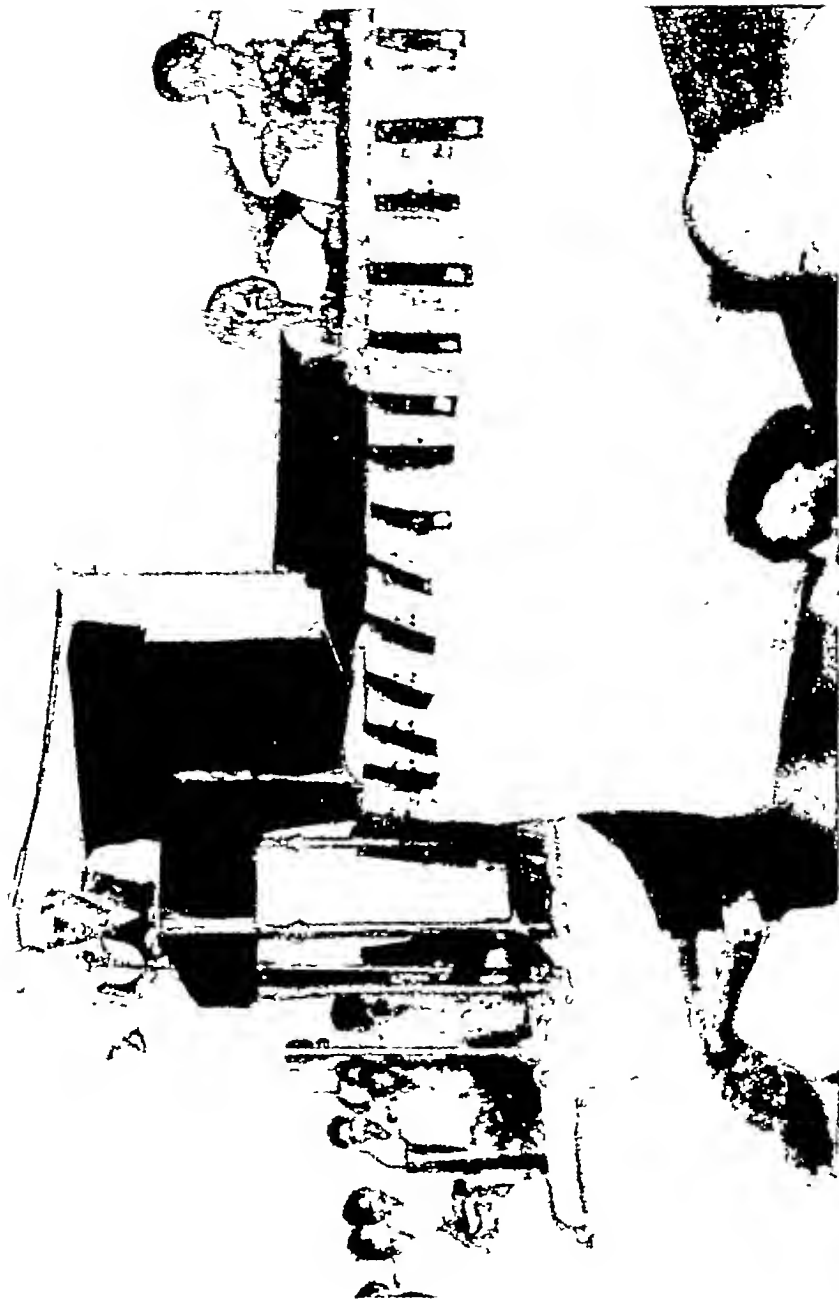
The Viceroy asked the leaders to take copies of this statement to their Working Committees and discuss it with them that day. He explained that he felt that it would be asking the Indian leaders to go against their consciences if he requested full agreement. He was, however, asking them to accept it in a peaceful spirit and to make it work without bloodshed, which would be the inevitable consequence if they did not accept it.

Pandit Nehru asked for a further definition of the difference between agreement and acceptance. The Viceroy explained that agreement would imply belief that the right principles were being employed. He had had to violate the principles of both sides, so could not ask for complete agreement. What he asked was for acceptance, in order to denote belief that the plan was a fair and sincere solution for the good of the country. Pandit Nehru stated that there could never be complete approval of the plan from Congress, but, on the balance, they accepted it.

Pandit Nehru pointed out that he and Sardar Patel had been committing themselves, step by step, to the present plan and had given their personal assurances. It had been difficult for them to go ahead as individuals



AT THE CONFERENCE OF LEADERS WITH LORD MOUNTBATTEN 2 JUNE 1947



AT THE A I C C. SESSION, NEW DELHI, 14 JUNE 1947

and in their representative capacities without consulting their colleagues, including the Congress President. The Congress Working Committee had also considered the broad outlines of the plan. He would let the Viceroy know what that Committee felt of it later that day. The next stage would be a meeting of the larger body, the All-India Congress Committee. This body might feel hurt that they had not been consulted earlier. But owing to the peculiar nature of the case, the leaders themselves had had to make decisions. They had had to take the responsibility on their own shoulders. The difficulty lay in the circumstances. He and his colleagues were caught in the tempo of events. The urgency of the situation made it difficult for them to be vague.

\* \* \* \*

Pandit Nehru said that a letter would be sent in to the Viceroy that evening giving an account of the Congress Working Committee's reaction to the statement.<sup>3</sup>

\* \* \* \*

Mr. Jinnah agreed to make such a broadcast, although he said that it would be difficult for him.<sup>4</sup> Pandit Nehru also agreed to do so and said that he would be definite in his broadcast. Pandit Nehru also made the suggestion that Sardar Baldev Singh should broadcast.

\* \* \* \*

The Viceroy said that he was prepared to let the leaders know what he was going to say in his broadcast the following day.

\* \* \* \*

It was finally agreed that Pandit Nehru, Mr. Jinnah and Sardar Baldev Singh should bring their scripts to the meeting the following day and read them out there.

3. See the preceding item.

4. Mountbatten had said that he intended to make a broadcast the following evening and requested Nehru and Jinnah also to broadcast immediately after it.

### 3. On the New Constitutional Proposals<sup>1</sup>

Friends and Comrades,

Nearly nine months ago, soon after my assumption of office, I spoke to you from this place.<sup>2</sup> I told you then that we were on the march and the goal had still to be reached. There were many difficulties and obstacles on the way and our journey's end might not be near, for that end was not the assumption of office in the Government of India, but the achievement of the full independence of India and the establishment of a cooperative commonwealth in which all will be equal sharers in opportunity, and in all things that give meaning and value to life.

Nine months have passed, months of sore trial and difficulty, of anxiety and sometimes even of heart-break. Yet, looking back at this period with its suffering and sorrow for our people, there is much on the credit side also, for India has advanced nationally and internationally and is respected today in the councils of the world. In the domestic sphere, something substantial has been achieved, though the burden on the common man still continues to be terribly heavy, and millions lack food and clothes and other necessities of life.

Many vast schemes of development are nearly ready, and yet it is true that most of our dreams about the brave things we are going to accomplish, have still to be realized. You know well the difficulties which the country has had to face, economic, political and communal. These months have been full of tragedy for millions and the burden on those who had the governance of the country in their hands has been great indeed. My mind is heavy with the thought of the sufferings of our people in the areas of disturbance, the thousands who are dead and those, especially our womenfolk, who have suffered agony worse than death. To their families and to innumerable people who have been uprooted from their homes and rendered destitute, I offer my deep sympathy and assurance that we shall do all in our power to bring relief. We must see to it that such tragedies do not happen again. At no time have we lost faith in the great destiny of India which takes shape even though with travail and suffering. My great regret has been that during this period owing to excess of work I have been unable to visit the numerous towns and villages of India as I used to do to meet my people and to learn about their troubles at first hand.

1 Broadcast from All India Radio, New Delhi, 3 June 1947. *The Hindustan Times*, 4 June 1947.

2 See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 1, pp 404-408.

Today I am speaking to you on another historic occasion, when a vital change affecting the future of India is proposed. You have just heard an announcement on behalf of the British Government.<sup>3</sup> This announcement lays down the procedure for self-determination in certain areas of India. It envisages on the one hand the possibility of these areas seceding from India; on the other, it promises a big advance towards complete independence. Such a big change must have the full concurrence of the people before effect can be given to it, for it must always be remembered that the future of India can only be decided by the people of India and not by any outside authority, however friendly. These proposals will be placed soon before the representative Assemblies of the people for consideration. But meanwhile the sands of time run out and decisions cannot await the normal course of events. So, while we must necessarily abide by what the people finally decide, we have to come to certain decisions ourselves, and to recommend them to the people for acceptance. We have, therefore, decided to accept these proposals and to recommend to our larger Committees, that they do likewise. It is with no joy in my heart that I commend these proposals to you, though I have no doubt in my mind that this is the right course, for generations we have dreamt and struggled for a free and independent united India. The proposal to allow certain parts to secede, if they so will, is painful for any of us to contemplate. Nevertheless, I am convinced that our present decision is the right one even from the larger viewpoint. The united India that we have laboured for was not one of compulsion and coercion, but a free and a willing association of a free people. It may be that in this way we shall reach that united India sooner than otherwise and that she will have a stronger and more secure foundation. We are little men serving great causes, but because the cause is great, something of that greatness falls upon us also. Mighty forces are at work in the world today and in India, and I have no doubt that we are ushering in a period of greatness for India. The India of geography, of history and tradition, the India of our minds and hearts, cannot change. On this historic occasion each one of us must pray that he might be guided aright in the service of the motherland and of humanity at large. We stand on a watershed, dividing the past from the future. Let us bury that past in so far as it is bad and forget all bitterness and recrimination. Let there be moderation in speech and writing. Let there be strength and perseverance in adhering to the cause and the ideals we have at heart. Let us face the future not with easy optimism or with any complacency or weakness but with confidence and a firm faith in India.

3. See *ante*, item 1, fn. 2.

There has been violence—shameful, degrading and revolting violence—in various parts of the country. This must end. We are determined to end it. We must make it clear that political ends are not to be achieved by methods of violence now or in the future. On this, the eve of great changes in India, we have to make a fresh start with clear vision and a firm mind with steadfastness and tolerance and a stout heart. We should not wish ill to anyone, but think always of every Indian as our brother and comrade. The good of the four hundred millions of India must be our supreme objective. We shall seek to build anew our relations with England on a friendly and cooperative basis, forgetting the past which has lain so heavily upon us.

I should like to express on this occasion my deep appreciation of the labours of the Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, ever since his arrival here at a critical juncture in our history. Inevitably, on every occasion of crisis and difficulty, we think of our great leader Mahatma Gandhi who has led us unfalteringly for over a generation through darkness and sorrow to the threshold of our freedom. To him we once again pay our homage. His blessing and wise counsel will happily be with us in the momentous years to come as always. With firm faith in our future I appeal to you to cooperate in the great task ahead and to march together to the haven of freedom for all in India. *Jai Hind.*

#### 4. To Liaquat Ali Khan<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
3 June 1947

My dear Nawabzada,

The new proposals that are being made by H M G. make a vital difference to the situation in India. They will undoubtedly affect the Government also in the near future. All of us will be busy with these developments during the next two months and after and it will hardly be possible for any Member of Government to leave India during this period. But apart from the question of time, I think it will be improper for us during this period of vital change to go abroad for the discussion of the

sterling balances question.<sup>2</sup> I suggest to you, therefore, that we should give up his idea for the present and inform H.M.G. that we are unable to send a delegation this month owing to important political developments in India.

2. I am suggesting this to Rajagopalachari and Matthai also.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

- 2 It had been intended that Liaquat Ali Khan, with two other Members of the Indian Cabinet, should lead a delegation to London for negotiations on the question of India's sterling balances. It was decided at Mountbatten's meeting with Indian leaders on 2 June 1947 that in view of the political developments taking place, no Cabinet Member could leave India for the present. In the event, a party of Indian officials visited London in July to make interim arrangements.

## 5. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
3 June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

In view of the new proposals which H.M.G. is making, it seems to me that we should not send our sterling balances delegation to England this month. None of our important men can be spared for any length of time during this critical period. Apart from this it does not seem proper to me that when we are on the eve of big changes affecting the Government, we should undertake discussions about this important matter. I am sure you will agree with me.

I have written to this effect to Mr Liaquat Ali Khan and suggested that he should inform H.M.G. that owing to the political situation in India Members of Government are unable to visit England for the sterling balances discussions.<sup>2</sup>

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 J.N. Collection

2. See the preceding item



## 6. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
4 June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Thank you for your letter of the 3rd June about the referendum in the N.W.F.P. I have informed Dr. Khan Sahib of what you have written.<sup>2</sup>

2. Dr. Khan Sahib's immediate question was about the change in Governors in the N.W.F.P. This matter has been before you for some time now. There has been progressive deterioration in the relations between the Provincial Government and the Governor and it is hardly possible to carry on the administration with this continuous conflict going on. You know how strongly the Provincial Ministry feel about this.

3. Quite independently of that Ministry and for reasons connected with External Affairs Department, I have been suggesting a change of Governors even before you assumed charge of the Viceroyalty.<sup>3</sup> My experience during the last nine months has convinced me of this and I feel that any delay in this is harmful. Indeed this applies to some other senior officers also serving in the Tribal Areas. I have had personal experience of them both during my visit to the Frontier and later, and I feel that they are totally unsuited for their present positions.

4. For the present, however, I should like to draw your particular attention to the case of the Governor. You will find, if you have the opportunity to do so, that there is very widespread feeling in this matter quite apart from any party or group. This exists in many circles which have come in contact with the present Governor of the N.W.F.P. during the past years in Delhi and elsewhere. The part that Sir Olaf Caroe played as Deputy Commissioner of Peshawar in 1930 when there was large-scale shooting and killing of peaceful demonstrators<sup>4</sup> still evokes bitter memories.

1 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 11, pp. 122-123

2 Mountbatten had requested Nehru to tell Khan Sahib that he was asking the Commander-in-Chief to provide nine British officers of the Indian army to supervise the referendum in the N.W.F.P., and would arrange for the officers to proceed to Peshawar in a few days' time.

3 See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 2, pp. 315-317

4 Olaf Caroe was Deputy Commissioner of Peshawar at the time of the Kisakhari Bazaar massacre of 1930

5. I would beg of you, therefore, to give urgent consideration to this matter.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 7. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
7 June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

You have informed us that Parliamentary legislation is being undertaken for establishment of Dominion Status in India.<sup>2</sup> The nature of this legislation will, no doubt, depend upon decisions to be taken in some provinces in the course of this month.

2. We are proceeding upon basis of Government of India Act being so amended as to give full Dominion powers and independence status to Government or Governments functioning as Dominions. In view of possibility of secession of certain parts of India, it is important how this matter is referred to in proposed legislation. In one case there will be a continuing entity from which certain parts have seceded, and in the other a number of seceding parts might be grouped together to form a Dominion. We are naturally interested in exact language of this proposed legislation and I hope that nothing will be done without full consultation and reference to us. It would be unfortunate if any part of legislation was objected to subsequently. I trust, therefore, that full opportunities will be given to us to see drafts being prepared and to make our own suggestions in regard to them.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Reported in Viceroy's telegram to Secretary of State dated, 9 June 1947. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 11, p. 220.
2. Just before the announcement of the statement of 3 June 1947 on the radio, Mountbatten in his broadcast said, "...His Majesty's Government should transfer power now to one or two Governments of British India, each having Dominion status, as soon as the necessary arrangements can be made. This I hope will be within the next few months. His Majesty's Government have accepted this proposal and are already having legislation prepared for introduction in Parliament this session."

## 8. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
10 June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I have just seen the text of the resolution of the All-India Muslim League.<sup>2</sup> I am afraid this resolution is not at all satisfactory. It begins by saying that the Council "notes with satisfaction that the Cabinet Mission's plan of May 16, 1946, will not be proceeded with and has been abandoned". It is true that this plan has been modified to a large extent. But, as a matter of fact, we are still functioning in many ways in accordance with that plan. Thus our Constituent Assembly has been meeting and will continue to meet under that plan. The Muslim League members from certain provinces are also now joining the Constituent Assembly. Thus it is incorrect to say that the plan has been abandoned, and indeed the Muslim League is itself going to conform to it to some extent.

2. The second paragraph of the Council's resolution is the most important one. It states that the Council approves of the division of India into two parts, and it proceeds to say that the Council cannot agree to the partition of Bengal and the Punjab or give its consent to such partition, though it has to consider H.M.G.'s plan as a whole. Thus the Council has definitely rejected one of the basic provisions in the new scheme.

3. In the third paragraph it is said that the Council accepts the fundamental principles of the plan as a compromise. It is not clear what they consider the fundamental principles to be. They may consider the fundamental principle to be one of division of India and not of the division of Bengal and the Punjab. Whatever this may be, it is accepted as a compromise. Of course it is a compromise, but the point is whether it is accepted as a settlement or not. The reports of the speeches delivered at

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 242-243

2. In its resolution of 9 June 1947 the Council of the Muslim League noted "with satisfaction that the Cabinet Mission's Plan of May 16th, 1946, will not be proceeded with and has been abandoned." It stressed that the only solution of India's problem was to divide India into two parts. Though it could not agree to the partition of Bengal and the Punjab it had to consider the plan as a whole. It gave full authority to Jinnah to accept the fundamental principles of the plan as a compromise and take all steps and decisions which might be necessary in connection with and relating to the plan.

the Council meeting lead to the conclusion that this was looked upon as a step only to be utilised for enforcement of further claims.<sup>3</sup>

4. The Council has given full authority to its President, Mr. Jinnah, to take all steps and decisions which may be necessary in connection with and relating to the plan. The position thus is this: The Council itself has not accepted the plan as a settlement but has given authority to the President to do so if he so chooses. This is leaving matters where they were. The least that can be done now is for Mr. Jinnah to accept the plan in its entirety as a settlement on behalf of the All-India Muslim League. Unless this is done clearly and in writing, there is every likelihood of difficulties arising in the near future. We have had vague resolutions of the Muslim League in the past<sup>4</sup> which were capable of more than one interpretation and many of our problems have been due to this fact.

3 The Council of the Muslim League, meeting at New Delhi on 9 June 1947, had felt that the 3 June plan fell far short of their demand. Jinnah said that it was for the Muslim nation to decide which Constituent Assembly they wished to join. Abdul Rahim maintained that the division of Bengal would weaken Pakistan. If Calcutta were divided, the loss to Muslims would be great. Until Chittagong harbour could be developed, Pakistan would have no outlet for its exports. Z. H. Lari said that it was not a question of losing Assam alone, but also of big pieces of the Punjab and Bengal. He thought the time had come for two separate Muslim organizations in the country, one of which would work in the Hindu majority provinces. Pir Sahib of Zakri felt ashamed of those Muslims who had supported the Congress Ministry in the NWFP.

4. The Muslim League at first accepted the Cabinet Mission's proposals of 16 May 1946, but later rejected them on account of differences with the Congress regarding the composition of the Viceroy's Executive Council. The two resolutions passed on 29 July 1946 rejected the "proposals" and decided to resort to direct action for the achievement of Pakistan. On 31 January 1947 the Executive Council of the Muslim League called upon Britain to declare that the constitutional plan formulated by the Cabinet Mission had failed because the Congress had not accepted the Statement of May 16, 1946 and recorded the opinion that the Constituent Assembly should be forthwith dissolved. The Muslim League resented the 20 February 1947 declaration and as a result communal riots broke out in the Punjab and the North West Frontier.

Very soon, as you know, the All-India Congress Committee will be meeting,<sup>5</sup> and the fact that the Council of the Muslim League has not clearly accepted the plan is sure to be pointed out and will affect people's decisions. I trust that before that happens, Mr. Jinnah will express his full agreement with H.M.G.'s scheme as a settlement of our communal problems and that this will be done in writing. Unless this is done the presumption will be that he does not wish to commit himself to the plan and does not wish to treat it as a settlement.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. An emergency meeting of the All India Congress Committee was held at New Delhi on 14 and 15 June 1947 to consider the British Government's statement of 3 June 1947

## 9. On the British Statement of 3 June 1947<sup>1</sup>

*Draft for the Congress Working Committee, 13 June 1947<sup>2</sup>*

*Resolution passed by the Congress Working Committee at Delhi on 13 June 1947<sup>2</sup>*

The A.I.C.C. has given careful consideration to the course of events since its last meeting in January last and, in particular, to the statements made on behalf of the British Government on February 20, 1947 and June 3, 1947. The Committee approves and endorses the resolutions passed by the Working Committee during this period.

The A.I.C.C. has given careful consideration to the course of events since its last meeting in January last and, in particular, to the statements made on behalf of the British Government on February 20, 1947 and June 3, 1947. The Committee approves and endorses the resolutions passed by the Working Committee during this period.

The Committee welcomes the declarations of the British Government to quit India and to transfer power completely to the Indian

The Committee welcomes the decision of the British Government to transfer power completely to the Indian people by the next

1. J N Collection.

2 *The Hindustan Times*, 14 June 1947.

people at an early date. It is firmly of opinion that India's problems can only be solved by Indians themselves when they are free to do so without the intervention of an external authority.

The Congress accepted in its entirety the British Cabinet Mission's Statement of 16th May 1946 as well as the subsequent interpretation thereof dated 6th December, 1946, and has been acting in accordance with it in the Constituent Assembly which was constituted in terms of the Cabinet Mission's plan. The Assembly has been functioning for over six months and has not only declared its objectives to be the establishment of an independent sovereign republic of India and a just social and economic order, but has also made considerable progress in framing the Constitution for the free Indian Union on the basis of fundamental rights guaranteeing freedom and equality of opportunity to all Indians. To that plan the Congress was and is prepared to adhere.

In view, however, of the refusal of the Muslim League to accept that plan and to participate in the Constituent Assembly, and further in view of the declared policy of the Congress that "it cannot think in terms of compelling the people in any territorial unit to remain in an Indian Union against their declared and established will" the A.I.C.C. is willing to ac-

August.

The Congress accepted the British Cabinet Mission's Statement of May 16, 1946, as well as the subsequent interpretation thereof dated December 6, 1946, and has been acting in accordance with it in the Constituent Assembly which was constituted in terms of the Cabinet Mission's plan.

That Assembly has been functioning for over six months and has not only declared its objectives to be the establishment of an Independent Sovereign Republic of India and a just social and economic order, but has also made considerable progress in framing the Constitution for the free Indian Union on the basis of fundamental rights, guaranteeing freedom and equality of opportunity to all Indians.

In view, however, of the refusal of the Muslim League to accept the plan of May 16 and to participate in the Constituent Assembly, and further in view of the policy of the Congress that it cannot think in terms of compelling the people in any territorial unit to remain in an Indian Union against their declared and established will, the A.I.C.C. accepts

cept as a variation of that plan the proposals now made on behalf of the British Government, which have laid down a procedure for ascertaining the will of the people concerned. But the acceptance can only be as a settlement of the various claims put forward by the Muslim League and is thus conditioned by the full and unequivocal acceptance of the proposals by or on behalf of the Muslim League.

The Congress has consistently upheld that the unity of India must be maintained. Ever since its inception, more than sixty years ago, the National Congress has laboured for the realization of a free and united India, and millions of our people have suffered in this great cause. Not only the labours and sacrifices of the past two generations but the long course of India's history and tradition bear witness to this essential unity. Geography and the mountains and the seas fashioned India as she is and no human agency can change that shape or come in the way of her final destiny. Economic circumstances and the insistent demands of international affairs make the unity of India still more necessary. The picture of India we have learnt to cherish will remain untarnished in our minds and hearts. In that picture the unity of India was not based on compulsion but friendship and cooperation. The A.I.C.C. earnestly trusts that when present passions have subsided India's

the proposals embodied in the announcement of June 3 which have laid down a procedure for ascertaining the will of the people concerned.

The Congress has consistently upheld that the unity of India must be maintained. Ever since its inception, more than sixty years ago, the National Congress has laboured for the realization of a free and united India, and millions of our people have suffered in this great cause. Not only the labours and sacrifices of the past two generations but the long course of India's history and tradition bear witness to this essential unity. Geography and the mountains and the seas fashioned India as she is and no human agency can change that shape or come in the way of her final destiny. Economic circumstances and the insistent demands of international affairs make the unity of India still more necessary.

The picture of India we have learnt to cherish will remain in our minds and hearts. The A.I.C.C. earnestly trusts that when present

problems will be viewed in their proper perspective and the false doctrine of two or more nations in India, leading to brother raising his hand against brother, will be discredited and discarded by all

The British Government's proposals of June 3, 1947 may lead to the secession of some parts of the country from India. However much this may be regretted, the A.I.C.C. accepts this possibility in the circumstances now prevailing as a settlement leading to a cessation of the brutality and violence that have disfigured and defaced some parts of the country, resulting in the establishment in the near future of a strong and free India. For India, though disfigured, will march ahead and realise her destiny.

Though freedom is at hand, the times are difficult, and the situation in India, political and economic as well as communal, demands vigilance and a united front of all those who care for the independence of India. It demands more than even a peaceful approach to all our problems, for these problems cannot be solved by methods of violence. There can be no submission to these methods

At this time of crisis and change, when unpatriotic and anti-social forces are trying to injure the cause of India and her people, the A.I.C.C. appeals to and demands of every Congressman and the people generally, to forget their

passions have subsided, India's problems will be viewed in their proper perspective and the false doctrine of two nations in India will be discredited and discarded by all

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Though freedom is at hand, the times are difficult, and the situation in India demands vigilance and a united front of all those who care for the independence of India.

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petty differences and disputes and to stand by, vigilant, disciplined and prepared to serve the cause of India's freedom and defend it with all their strength from all who may seek to do it injury.

their petty differences and disputes and to stand by, vigilant, disciplined and prepared to serve the cause of India's freedom and defend it with all their strength from all who may seek to do it injury.

## 10. The Unavoidability of Partition<sup>1</sup>

Friends and Comrades, *Jai Hind!*

India's heart has been broken but her essential unity has not been destroyed. How will you repair the broken heart? It can be only on the basis of a programme

The horrible riots in the Punjab, Bengal and elsewhere were no isolated riots. They were planned attacks. It seemed the administration had broken down and there was no authority left in the country to enforce order. How is it that the British officers who coped with the civil disobedience movements in the past were unable to cope with the present disturbances? Where there are Congress Ministries, disturbances were brought under control, but where the British exercised authority, there was chaos. In the Punjab where there was cent per cent British rule despite the efforts of certain senior officers, murder and arson continued. The trouble was prevalent the most where there were British officers in charge, and divisions under the control of either Hindu or Muslim officers were comparatively quiet.<sup>2</sup> The Interim Government was able to do nothing to protect the people.

Now it would be a futile controversy to go into the merits of Dominion Status *versus* independence. The most urgent task at present is to arrest the swift drift towards anarchy and chaos. Disruptive forces are at work and the most important disruptive force is that of the Muslim League.

1. Speech at the A.I.C.C. meeting in New Delhi on 15 June 1947 on the Working Committee resolution accepting the 3 June statement. From *National Herald*, 16 June 1947.
2. In Madras, Bombay, U.P., Bihar, Orissa, Assam, Central Provinces and N.W.F.P. there were Congress Ministries whereas Bengal and Sind were under Muslim League Ministries. In the Punjab, when Premier Khizr Hayat Khan Tiwana resigned on 2 March 1947, Khan Iftikar Hussain Khan of Mamdot became the Premier. But both the Hindus and the Sikhs refused to cooperate and the Governor, E.M. Jenkins, was obliged on 5 March 1947 to take over the administration under section 93.

Our first task should be the establishment of a strong Central Government to rule the country firmly and to assure the individual's liberty and life. All other questions are of secondary importance.

There is no question of any surrender to the Muslim League and what myself and my colleagues have agreed to is that the issue of partition should be referred to the people for a verdict. There is nothing novel in the plan for partition. The House will remember Rajaji's formula<sup>3</sup> on the basis of which Mahatma Gandhi carried on negotiations with Mr. Jinnah. At that time myself and my colleagues were in the Ahmednagar Fort. We discussed the question in prison. While we disagreed with the approach to the whole question, there was no disagreement on the fundamentals of the formula.<sup>4</sup> It must be realised that it is not possible to coerce even with swords unwilling parts to remain under the Indian domain. If they are forced to stay in the Union no progress and planning will be possible. We must take the warning from China.<sup>5</sup> Continued internal strife and turmoil will bring progress of a nation to a standstill. In arriving at a decision we must look at the international context as well. The picture of the world today is one of destruction and impoverishment which by itself may prevent an immediate war but one can never say what will happen in the future.

The Congress cannot afford to act in an irresponsible manner by passing high-sounding resolutions. A responsible body must not think in terms of today only, but there is a tomorrow and a day after that. It will be ridiculous to suggest that the British would do everything before they quit. The June 3 statement could not have come about had there been no agreement. It is not an imposed award. Circumstances were such that the Congress agreed to it. It is not like one of those old decisions of the British Government which we could accept or reject. The acceptance for which I am wholly responsible does not mean that I agree to every word in the statement but I agree with the fundamental principles therein.

The riots in Rawalpindi, Multan, Amritsar, Calcutta, Noakhali, Bihar and elsewhere present the situation in a different light. To suggest that the Congress Working Committee took fright and therefore "surrendered"

3 On 23 April 1942 Rajagopalachari secured the passage of two resolutions by the Congress members of the Madras Legislature recommending to the A.I.C.C. that Congressmen should acknowledge the Muslim League's claim for separation and that negotiations be immediately started with the League for the "purpose of arriving at an agreement and securing the installation of a national Government to meet the present emergency"

4 See *Selected Works*, Vol 13, p. 580

5 In China, which was much weakened at the close of the Second World War, a civil war raged through 1946 between the Nationalists and the Communists

is wrong. But it is correct to say that they are very much disturbed at the prevailing madness. Homesteads burnt, women and children murdered; and why are all these tragic and brutal things happening? We could have checked them by resorting to the sword and the lathi but would that solve the problem? Some people from the Punjab said that the Congress had let them down. What did they want me to do? Should I send an army? I am sad and bitter and India's heart is broken. The victims in Rawalpindi said that they were being killed in order that the League might rule. The wound must be healed. With whatever we are able to salvage, we must plan out a programme on the basis of partition.

It is sufficient for the House to compare what happened in Noakhali and Calcutta and again what happened in Bihar. By supreme efforts the Congress was able to control the situation in Bihar but they could do nothing in the Punjab. Why did such things happen in the Punjab and why was the Khizr Ministry broken and how was it no one seemed to be capable of controlling the Punjab disturbances? The answer is patent. The Congress Working Committee passed a resolution in favour of the partition of the Punjab into two administrative provinces.<sup>6</sup> Partition is better than murder of innocent citizens. After the resolution was passed, the Committee received numerous complaints from Bengal that Bengal also should be divided. The underlying principle in the case of the Punjab and Bengal is one and the same.

It is wrong to suggest that I and two others decided the fate of millions. The Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and other responsible organisations in the province strongly supported the partition proposal.<sup>7</sup>

The next question that arose was, having divided the Punjab and Bengal, has the Congress abandoned the Sikhs and the Hindus? An answer should be found. By high-sounding resolutions the Congress will not be able to help them. Even when the Punjab was one they were not able to help the people. An answer to this problem will no doubt be found. However, there is no reason why the minorities there should be tyrannised and persecuted. There may be individual cases of rioting but there is not much room in future for organised attacks on the minorities. I have nothing much to say about Sind and, so far as Sylhet is concerned, there is to be a referendum and I cannot forecast the result.<sup>8</sup> I am much

6 8 March 1947.

7. The Bengal Provincial Congress Committee passed a resolution on 4 April 1947 demanding the partition of Bengal.

8. The referendum in the Sylhet district of Assam, held on 6 and 7 July, resulted in a majority of 55,578 in favour of joining the East Bengal territory of Pakistan, 239,619 votes being cast for union with Pakistan and 184,041 for remaining in India.

worried about the N.W.F.P. If Bengal and Punjab went out, the Frontier would be isolated. The question is now the subject of consultation between the Committee and the Frontier leaders.

Governmental authority in the country has almost collapsed. The British are no longer interested because they are leaving. This probably explains why some officers asked the victims who went to them for help to come to me or Sardar Patel for help. They are not desirous of shouldering any further responsibility and many have become callous.

Any controversy over the question of Dominion Status *versus* independence is meaningless. What the Congress demanded was that the Government should function as a Dominion Government and conventions must be established. The acceptance of Dominion Status was without prejudice to the republic resolution adopted by the Constituent Assembly.<sup>9</sup> But the composition of the present Government is such that no agreement can work and no convention can be established and the Viceroy, therefore, suggested the June 3 statement and the Congress accepted it.

All talk of Pakistan and Hindustan is due to a misunderstanding. Both from practical and legal points of view India as an entity continues to exist except that certain provinces and parts of certain provinces now seek to secede. The seceding areas are free to have any relations they like with foreign Powers. The Government of India is intact and there should be no further confusion of Hindustan and Pakistan and people should not allow such ideas to grow.

The present, perhaps, is the most difficult period full of trials and tribulations. Today we have to shoulder responsibility. The first thing we have to do is to establish the independence of India firmly and set up a strong Central Government. Having established a strong and stable government, all other programmes will not create much difficulty. The Congress has a heavy responsibility. You must bend all your energies to strengthen the Congress organisation. We have to face dangers, both external and internal, and if we are not strong we will go down.

As for the Indian States, I will have something to say on the subject when the next resolution comes up for discussion. However, I am confident that the Congress will be able to deal with and solve the problem of the States. And if we proceed on the right lines the seceding provinces will also rejoin the Union.

I would ask the A.I.C.C. not to vote for the resolution out of any sympathy for the Working Committee but they must do so out of conviction.

9. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 1, pp 240-251

## 11. Telegram to Secretary of State<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
17 June 1947

Many thanks for your telegram No. 7659 of 13th June.<sup>2</sup> I am grateful for your helpful reply and hope to nominate someone soon for detailed discussion of plan about which Krishna Menon spoke to you last month. I should also like to thank you for receiving Menon. Best wishes.

- 1 Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No 1-Eur/47, p 77/Corr, National Archives of India
- 2 The Secretary of State had expressed his willingness to help in the "proposed diplomatic establishment in London for representation with various European countries "

## 12. To G.T. Vazirani<sup>1</sup>

19.6.47

My dear Mr. Vazirani,

I received your letter some time back but I am sorry for the delay in replying to it.

I am fully conscious of the difficulties we have to face in the present circumstances, more particularly those arising out of the announcement of June 3 <sup>2</sup> The whole question of Congress in relation to the seceding parts will have to be reviewed but I hope the Indian National Congress would continue to function even in those areas though the nature of work there will vary according to the conditions which the new state may bring about. We all sympathise with the difficulties of the minorities in such areas but I hope they will be met with the same determination

- 1 AICC. File No P-15(KW-1)/1946-48, p 107, N M M L  
G.T. Vazirani was one of the Secretaries of the Sind Provincial Congress Committee
- 2 In his letter to Acharya Jugal Kishore of 6 June 1947, G T Vazirani had said that with the announcement of June 3 fear of large-scale disorder had definitely receded but a very difficult and awkward situation was created for the local Congress in Sind

with which the Congress has faced similar difficulties in the past. Mr. Jairamdas Doulatram is fully alive to these difficulties and he is in constant touch with the Working Committee. I am sure the advice which he gives you in these matters will help you to tide over the difficulties.

I hope you are all right.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 13. To Lord Ismay<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
22 June 1947

Dear Lord Ismay,

I received your letter of the 21st June last night on my return from Hardwar. Thank you for sending me the draft memorandum on the constitutional functions of the proposed States Department of the Central Government.

2. There is only one thing I would like to suggest. The memorandum deals with the whole complex of administrative and economic arrangements. I do not know if this includes certain political arrangements also and relations. You will remember that in the Cabinet Mission's memorandum of 12th May 1946 it was stated that "the void will have to be filled either by the States entering into a federal relationship with the Successor Government or Governments in British India or, failing this, entering into particular political arrangements with it or them."

3. Perhaps this matter can be brought out in the "Standstill" agreement

4. I am sorry for the slight delay in sending you our suggestions for the "Standstill" agreement.<sup>2</sup> I wanted to consult some lawyers and constitutional experts in regard to this. I hope to send it to you before long.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

<sup>1</sup> *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, p 559.

<sup>2</sup> See *post*, section 6, item 24

## 14. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
26th June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

It has been announced in the press and on the radio that legislation is going to be introduced in Parliament in regard to amending the Government of India Act on or about July 7th.<sup>2</sup> You were good enough to inform us that before any legislation was so introduced, we would have an opportunity of examining it. It would be unfortunate if the draft was finally prepared and there was something in it to which we took strong exception. Although the main lines have been agreed upon, it is a matter of vital importance what the approach should be.

The question is not one of repealing the Government of India Act but of amending it. Any repeal would create grave difficulties and would leave us without any kind of a constitution. In fact, you mentioned in your broadcast that one of the reasons for giving Dominion Status was to enable India to have a constitution until the Constituent Assembly made a new constitution.<sup>3</sup>

The amending Act would confer Dominion Status on India and delimit the territory of India by the exclusion of the seceding areas. It would constitute the Constituent Assembly into a sovereign legislature with power necessarily to amend the Constitution Act as it thought fit. It would thus bring this Act into line with the Statute of Westminster.<sup>4</sup> The Act would apply to all the territories of India, with the exception of those that have seceded, which territories would be dealt with separately and constituted into a Dominion.

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 658-659

2. Newspapers of 25 June 1947 reported that preparations were being hastened in Whitehall to pass the Bill in order to meet the date of 15 August 1947 which Mountbatten himself had suggested.

3. In his broadcast of 3 June Mountbatten stated. "...If we waited until a constitutional set-up for all-India was agreed, we should have to wait a long time ...The solution to this dilemma, which I put forward, is that His Majesty's Government should transfer power now to one or two Governments... each having Dominion Status. "

4. The decisions of the Imperial Conference of 1926 were given statutory force by Britain by the Statute of Westminster on 11 December 1931. The Crown renounced its right to legislate for the dominions except at their request and with their consent, but a dominion could still not pass laws repugnant to existing British laws applying to that dominion

There would thus be two Acts. If there is only one Act dealing with these processes in India and in Pakistan then there will be a great deal of confusion and the status of India would be affected. We are naturally interested in the continuing entity that is India. As regards Pakistan, though we may be interested, it is for the representatives of Pakistan to say what they want and how they want it. Mixing up the two will lead to obvious difficulties. Parliamentary legislation will embody our constitution till such time as our Constituent Assembly draws up another constitution. If that parliamentary legislation deals with Pakistan also it will mean that our constitution is contained in a statute which also contains the constitution of another country. That would not only be incongruous but legally and constitutionally inadvisable.

The two processes of creating a Dominion of India and a Pakistan Dominion are not simultaneous, even though they might follow each other in quick succession. The Pakistan Dominion follows the secession of certain areas. Therefore, the Act for creating the Pakistan Dominion has to be a new and separate Act following the constitution of India as a Dominion.

There may also be other practical difficulties in the way of dealing with India and Pakistan together in the same legislation. India is not only a continuing entity but also a running organisation. Pakistan as a state is starting from scratch. Any attempt to tie them up legally will mean putting two things together which are dissimilar and which are functioning differently. That would not be good either for India or for Pakistan. The legislation, therefore, has to deal with each separately and on merits.

These are some points that I should like to place before you again, as I am anxious that parliamentary draftsmen should not ignore them at this stage. If a single Bill is drafted for parliamentary legislation dealing with all these processes, it will raise all manner of complications and difficulties and it would be unfortunate if we have to raise objections at that stage.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru



## 15. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
28 June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

In your letter of the 27th June<sup>2</sup> you have said that you hope to have authority to show me the draft legislation after the next week-end. I should like to point out that this legislation is of the utmost consequence to India and we shall necessarily have to consider it very carefully and to take constitutional and legal advice on it. We are eager to get the Bill through Parliament as early as possible. But unless it is thoroughly vetted, the hurry may lead to unfortunate results.

2 I think you told me that parliamentary legislation is kept secret till it is actually placed before Parliament. How far this rule is applied to legislation affecting Dominions, I do not know. My own recollection is that in the case of the Union of South Africa Act,<sup>3</sup> the Bill was drawn up completely in South Africa and then sent to Parliament for formal adoption. Someone in Parliament pointed out a small grammatical error. It was stated by the then Prime Minister that he would not correct that error as he had given an assurance to accept in its entirety what the South African leaders had produced. This does not indicate that parliamentary secrecy was functioning when the Bill was being drafted in South Africa. Indeed in legislation of this type where the future of a country is concerned, it seems to me an entirely wrong approach to proceed secretly and without taking a sufficient number of people into one's confidence. Legislation is always a complicated affair requiring the utmost scrutiny not only of one person but of many minds. I trust that this full opportunity will be given to us before the Bill is introduced in Parliament

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 11, p 728

2. Mountbatten had hoped to show the draft Bill which he thought would satisfy Nehru as fulfilling the essential requirements

3. The Union of South Africa Act of 1910 passed by the British Government brought into existence the Union of South Africa on 31 May 1910

16. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
29 June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Thank you for your two letters of today's date.<sup>2</sup> I shall come as suggested on Tuesday the 1st July at 10 a.m.

2 I am not competent to say anything about the procedure in regard to draft Bills for Parliament. But we are naturally deeply concerned with any legislation which is going to affect the future of India vitally. Indeed this Bill is likely to be the basis for the interim constitution of India. It will not only define the relations of India to the United Kingdom but also to Pakistan. It may deal with the position of the States in India. All these are highly intricate and sometimes controversial matters and require the most careful consideration.

3. So far as I know, any Bill establishing Dominion Status has not only originated in the Dominion in question but has also received full consideration there before it became a Bill for Parliament. The procedure being adopted here is entirely different and the whole drafting of the Bill takes place without any reference to us and we are only given a chance to see the draft and perhaps suggest some amendments at the last stage. I am afraid this will prove very unsatisfactory. Sir B.N. Rau's presence will, no doubt, prove helpful and we would welcome it. But we would like to consult a number of other eminent lawyers, experts and constitutionalists such as Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyer,<sup>3</sup> Sir N Gopalaswami Ayyangar, Mr. K M Munshi and possibly others who may be available here. In any complicated piece of legislation it is desirable that several minds view it so that no important matter is overlooked.

4. I should particularly like Gandhiji to see the draft Bill and to advise us in regard to it. His advice is especially valuable in such matters as he

1 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 746-747

2 In his letter of 29 June 1947, Mountbatten invited Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel on 1 July 1947 to study the draft of the Indian Independence Bill. The British Government, he said, were insistent that the contents of the Bill were to remain secret in conformity with usual parliamentary practice. He proposed that representatives of the Congress and the Muslim League sit in separate rooms to study the draft.

3. (1883-1953), Advocate-General, Madras, 1929-44, member of the Constituent Assembly and one of the chief drafters of the Constitution

has considerable experience of this kind of thing and is interested in it. For him to see it after it has been finalised and then to point out some deficiencies would be unfortunate.

5. It is your desire, as it is ours, to have a Bill which carries with it the willing assent of all parties concerned. If this is not obtained, then the object of the Bill is somewhat nullified

6. I would, therefore, earnestly request you to consider this matter afresh and, if necessary, consult H.M.G. in regard to it so that we may have the fullest opportunities of consulting our colleagues and our advisers.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 17. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
30 June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Thank you for your letter of the 30th June.<sup>2</sup> I am grateful to you for your agreeing to some additional experts and lawyers accompanying us tomorrow morning. I shall convey your invitation to them.

2. It was not my intention to have a larger party at the Viceroy's House tomorrow morning. What I was thinking of was to have the time and opportunity to consult my colleagues as well as these experts. You will appreciate that it is very awkward for us to ignore our colleagues in the Cabinet in a matter of this kind. I have mentioned to them that Sardar Patel and I had been invited by you to see the draft parliamentary legislation. They felt hurt at being kept out of this business and I feel that they were completely right. As Members of the Cabinet it concerns them much more than others and we have to consult them at every stage. I

1 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 803-804

2 In his letter of 30 June 1947 Mountbatten agreed to Nehru's proposal of additional invitees for the meeting on 1 July but emphasised that there should be no leakage of the contents of the Bill prior to its publication in London

feel, therefore, that it is very necessary for us to take them into our confidence in regard to this Bill. I realise fully the importance of secrecy in this matter and that there should be no leakage of the contents of the Bill. We shall make every effort to prevent a leakage. I suggest that you should allow us to have a copy of the Bill so that we may show it to our colleagues in the Cabinet. That copy will be kept by me and it will not go out of my possession. Without the draft Bill it is difficult to get any proper idea of it or to consider it carefully.

3. I do not know if Mr. Gandhi will be able to come tomorrow at 10 in the morning as that is a very inconvenient time for him.<sup>3</sup>

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Mahatma Gandhi was also present at the first meeting to consider the draft of the Indian Independence Bill

## 18. Mountbatten's Record of Talks with Nehru and Patel<sup>1</sup>

Most grateful for your telegram No. 77. Situation here incredibly explosive and more dangerous than any I have seen to date. Have been using Krishna Menon as contact with Nehru and V.P. Menon as contact with Patel, and had a meeting with them today at which both agreed that all Congress leaders are firmly united in their complete refusal to be dictated to by Jinnah any longer. Disastrous consequences of withdrawal of Muslim League on chances of getting Bill passed unopposed through Parliament this session were fully explained. Both Nehru and Patel said they would face any consequences rather than yield once more to Jinnah which they consider would be quite fatal to their standing with their own followers.

2. They point out that in that case they will in any event hold all the portfolios for India and that this will suit them quite well

1 2 July 1947 Mountbatten's telegram to Attlee, 2 July 1947. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 11, p 826.

## 19. Comments of Congress on the Draft Independence Bill<sup>1</sup>

We have considered the Draft Bill<sup>2</sup> and have the following comments to offer:—

*Form of Bill*—(a) We understand that in the opinion of H.M.G. the form of the present Bill makes it sufficiently clear that the new Dominion of India will continue the international personality of the existing India. But the point is so vital that all avoidable doubt should be removed.

(b) For international purposes, the whole of India, including British India and the Indian States, is at present a single State. Under the Bill, two independent Dominions are set up in British India and the Indian States are detached from both. This simultaneous fragmentation may create doubts as to whether even the Dominion of India is anything more than one of the new fragments and whether as such it can continue to represent the old entity, since even the two Dominions are described in the Bill as “new Dominions”. To avoid all possible doubt *in this respect, and to preserve the continuity of the parent State for other essential purposes*, there should be two separate Bills: the first, creating the Dominion of India to consist of the whole of the existing India excluding the Pakistan provinces and such of the contiguous Indian States as may accede to Pakistan; and the second, creating the Dominion of Pakistan to consist of the excluded territories.

(c) If, owing to the time factor, it is not possible to have two Bills at once, we would suggest that the single Act now being passed should be divided as soon as possible *into* two separate Acts, in much the same way as the Government of Burma Act was separated from the Government of India Act in December 1935, although the two were originally passed as a single measure in August 1935.<sup>3</sup>

(d) We would in any case suggest the insertion of a provision in the Bill explicitly stating that the rights and obligations of India under any

1. 3 July 1947. From a facsimile printed in *The Transfer of Power in India* by V P Menon (Delhi, 1957), between pp 532-533. The facsimile contains corrections in Nehru's hand which have been indicated in italics, also printed in *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 854-858.
2. Printed in *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 780-794.
3. The Government of India Act, 1935, promised complete separation of Burma from India on 1 April 1937. The Government of Burma Act, 2 August 1935, provided for a cabinet led by a Prime Minister and responsible to a bicameral legislature.

treaty or agreement with foreign States shall as from the appointed day become the rights and obligations of the Dominion of India, saving only those obligations which by their nature, can only be performed in territories outside the Dominion. Such a provision will, incidentally, contain the assurance which H.M.G. apparently desire in this behalf.<sup>4</sup>

2. *We now proceed to the details of the Bill in its present form.*

*Preamble*—For the reasons mentioned above, the preamble should read—

A Bill to make provision for the establishment of the Dominion of India and the creation of a separate Dominion of Pakistan and for other matters consequential etc., etc.,

*Clause 1(1)*—For the same reasons, this sub-clause should provide that as from August 15, 1947, India shall be a Dominion and Pakistan a separate Dominion.

*Clause 2(1)*—India should be defined to be the whole of India as under the Act of 1935 excluding Pakistan; Pakistan should be defined to be the British Indian areas mentioned in the Bill *plus* such of the contiguous Indian States as may accede thereto

*Clause 2(3)*—It should be made clear that “any area” in this sub-clause includes acceding Indian States *There is no specific provision in the Bill in its present form for the accession of Indian States.*

*Clause 3(2) (a)*—We see no reason why merely because of the transfer of Sylhet to East Bengal, the present province of Assam should cease to exist.<sup>5</sup> This would merely furnish an additional argument to those who might wish to contend that the State now recognised as India ceases to exist with the separation of Pakistan Sylhet is only one district

4 The British Government wanted an assurance to the effect that the Dominion Governments when set up would consider themselves as successors to all the rights and obligations in respect of the treaties concluded in the name of His Majesty's Government

5 According to the Draft Bill if, as a result of the referendum in the district of Sylhet, it was decided that that district would form part of the new province of East Bengal, then the province of Assam as constituted under the Government of India Act, 1935, would cease to exist.

out of about a dozen in Assam, although it has a large population. Bombay did not cease to exist as Bombay owing to the separation of Sind.

*Clause 6(1)*—Now that we have suggested a new definition of India so as to make it consist of existing India excluding Pakistan, a proviso will have to be inserted under this sub-clause<sup>6</sup> on the following lines:—  
provided that save as otherwise provided by or under this Act, the Legislature of the Dominion shall exercise jurisdiction only over the Governors' provinces and Chief Commissioners' provinces or parts thereof included in India.

*Clause 6(2)*—The words "any existing or future Act of Parliament" may not cover the Act that is being now passed.<sup>7</sup> The words should be "this Act or any existing or future Act of Parliament."

*Clause 6(4)*<sup>8</sup>—Owing to the ambiguity of the words "as part of the law of the Dominion", a written assurance was given to the Dominion delegates at the Imperial Conference of 1930 in connection with a similar phrase then proposed to be inserted in the Statute of Westminster that it was not Parliament's intention, under the provision in question, to enact any law in relation to the Dominions which, if enacted in relation to a foreign State, would be inconsistent with international comity. The same object can be better achieved by substituting for the words "unless it is declared in the Act that the Dominion has requested and consented to the passing thereof", which occur in the Bill, the words "unless extended thereto by an Act of the Legislature of the Dominion" which occur in section 2 of the Status of the Union Act, 1934, in South Africa

*Clause 7(1) (b)*—The complete wiping out of all treaties and agreements in force at the date of passing of the Act will create administrative

6 In the Draft Bill this sub-clause read "The Legislature of each of the new Dominions shall have full power to make laws for that Dominion, including laws having extra-territorial operation"

7 This clause read "No law and no provision of any law made by the Legislature of either of the new Dominions shall be void or inoperative on the ground that it is repugnant to the law of England, or to the provisions of any existing or future Act of Parliament of the United Kingdom"

8 In the Draft Bill this sub-clause read. "No Act of Parliament of the United Kingdom passed on or after the appointed day shall extend, or be deemed to extend, to either of the new Dominions as part of the law of that Dominion unless it is expressly declared in that Act that the Dominion has requested and consented to the passing thereof."

chaos of the gravest kind.<sup>9</sup> Railway agreements, customs agreements, harbour agreements, agreements ceding criminal and civil jurisdiction, extradition agreements, agreements connected with the administration of Posts and Telegraphs, Irrigation agreements, agreements for the protection of Indian States from external aggression, and more generally, agreements relating to defence and external affairs and a host of other agreements will all lapse and even the existence of States like Benares and Mysore which rest on Instruments of Transfer from the Crown *might* be deprived of all legal basis. Even the Cabinet Mission's memorandum of May 12, 1946, contemplated in paragraph 4 that pending the conclusion of new agreements, existing arrangements in all matters of common concern should continue. Paragraph 5 of the same memorandum, after referring to the lapse of paramountcy and the consequent cessation of all rights and obligations *flowing* therefrom, goes on to state that the void so created must be filled by the States entering either into a federal relationship or into new political arrangements with the successor government. To negotiate new agreements—some of them multipartite—with a large number of Indian States will be a long and laborious task. Therefore, both to save time and trouble, instead of individual standstill agreements, a standstill proviso of general application to all the States should be inserted in the Bill itself.

It may be pointed out that under the clause as drafted, treaties and agreements in force at the date of the passing of the Act lapse as from "the appointed day". This seems to imply that agreements which may be negotiated between the passing of the Act and the appointed day do not lapse. It may be that the intention of the provision is that standstill agreements should be negotiated during this intervening period, while the paramountcy of the Crown continues. This is borne out by the statement in the memorandum of May 12, 1946, that the British Government and the Crown Representative—i.e., the Paramount Power—will lend such assistance as they can in negotiating such agreements. There is however, no intrinsic difference between such agreements and the agreements which the Bill seeks to terminate. Moreover, owing to the time factor, it will not be possible to arrive at new agreements before the appointed day and the easiest way of relieving what was the intention of the memorandum of May 12, 1946, would be to insert in the Bill itself a proviso on the following lines:—

Until new agreements are completed the existing relations and

<sup>9</sup> Cf. e.g. Section 13 of the Government of India Act, 1935, which provided that all treaties and agreements in force at the date of the passing of the Act between His Majesty and the rulers of Indian States should continue in force.



arrangements between His Majesty and any Indian Ruler in all matters of common concern shall continue as between the new Dominion Government and the State concerned.

The proviso should be added to clause 7(1)(b) and we would suggest that the three alternatives mentioned below (in order of preference) be considered in this connection:—

Clause 7(1)(b) should read:—

The suzerainty of His Majesty over the Indian States lapses, provided that,—(here insert the proviso mentioned above). Under this alternative, all the words occurring in the sub-clause except those relating to the lapse of suzerainty go out

(2) The sub-clause should read.—

The suzerainty of His Majesty over the Indian States lapses and with it all functions exercised by His Majesty ... sufferance or otherwise, provided that—(here insert the proviso mentioned above). Under this alternative, the words "all treaties and agreements in force between His Majesty and the Rulers of Indian States" occurring in the Bill go out

(3) The sub-clause may be retained in its present form, but with the proviso mentioned above

*Clause 7(1)(c)*<sup>10</sup>—There should be a proviso similar to that suggested in connection with clause 7(1)(b), otherwise there is the danger of agreements relating to the Khyber Pass, the Bolan Pass etc.<sup>11</sup> lapsing, with prejudicial consequences to the security of the country.

*Clause 9 (5)*—We agree to the substitution of "31st March 1948" for "six months from the appointed day".<sup>12</sup>

10 According to this sub-clause the treaties and agreements between His Majesty and the tribal areas were to lapse

11 A treaty was concluded between Mortimer Durand and the Amir Abdur Rahman on November 1893, by which the latter renounced all claims to a band of territory extending from the Hindukush to the westernmost limits of Baluchistan, including the Khyber and Bolan passes. As the inheritor of the rights and duties of the Government of British India, Pakistan considered this 1893 boundary, commonly known as the Durand Line, as the international frontier, much to the discomfiture of Afghanistan

12 In the Draft Bill this sub-clause read "No order shall be made under this section, by the Governor of any Province, after the appointed day, or, by the Governor-General after six months from the appointed day or such earlier date as may be determined in the case of either Dominion, by any law of the Legislature of that Dominion."

*Clause 10*—We have no objection, on the merits, to any suitable amendment, but we consider that the security of tenure provided for the Judges of the Federal Court and of the High Courts in the Government of India Act 1935 is adequate.<sup>13</sup>

*Clause 14*—We see no reason why the Secretary of State should continue to make these payments but if he does make them the Dominion will of course provide the necessary funds. *The High Commissioner should in future do this work. The clause is unnecessary and should be deleted.*<sup>14</sup>

*Clause 19 (3) (a) (iii)*—We have already pointed out that the province of Assam should not cease to exist merely because of the transfer of Sylhet. Therefore this sub-clause will need modification.

*Proviso: The Proviso to Clause 19(3)(a) is at present vaguely worded. We consider it essential that the powers and functioning of the Constituent Assemblies in respect of the making of the new constitutions should be placed beyond doubt. The Constituent Assemblies should have full power on their own to provide for the filling of casual vacancies and the participation in their work of representatives from Indian States and Tribal Areas. We would therefore suggest that the proviso, as drafted, be dropped and in its place the following be inserted as a new sub-clause 3 A:*

Nothing in this Act shall be construed as detracting from the full power of either Constituent Assembly

- (a) to frame a Constitution for India or Pakistan, as the case may be,
- (b) to give full effect to such Constitution in supersession of the Constitution previously in force,
- (c) to make provision for the filling of casual vacancies, and
- (d) to regulate the participation of representatives of the Indian States and of the Tribal Areas in the Assembly in accordance with such arrangements as it may make in this behalf

13. According to this sub-clause a judge of the Federal Court or a High Court would be entitled to the same conditions of service as he was entitled to "immediately before the appointed day"

14. According to this clause the Secretary of State was authorised to continue for the time being making payments which up to the appointed day he was making "on behalf of governments constituted under the Government of India Act, 1935."

## 20. Comments of Congress on the League's Comments on the Draft Independence Bill<sup>1</sup>

### Clause 2:—

The Dominion of India does continue the international personality of the existing India, retaining whatever is not specifically transferred to Pakistan.<sup>2</sup> We cannot possibly agree to any amendment which will throw doubt on this position. On the contrary, we have proposed amendments designed to confirm it beyond any possibility of doubt.<sup>3</sup>

As regards the Andaman and Nicobar Islands,<sup>4</sup> their total population, according to the census of 1941, was about 34,000, of whom about 12,000 were Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists; about 11,000 aboriginal tribes; about 8,000 Muslims; and about 3,000 others. It will thus be seen that they are very predominantly a non-Muslim area; it is not even correct to say that the majority of the population consists of tribes. In the judicial sphere, their administration is for certain purposes linked with the High Court at Calcutta. In other respects they are administered as a Chief Commissioner's province.

The islands do not lie on the direct route between the two parts of Pakistan. If they are of strategic importance to Pakistan, much more so are they to the Dominion of India. The claim that these islands should be allotted to Pakistan is therefore wholly untenable. There can be no question of their being allotted to or forming part of Pakistan; only such areas can be included in Pakistan as have expressed a wish to that effect; the rest remains with India.

1. Forwarded by Nehru to Mountbatten on 4 July 1947 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 887-888.
2. The Muslim League had commented that the territories of the Dominion of India should also be defined; otherwise "the impression will be created that the new Dominion of India succeeds to whatever is not specifically transferred to Pakistan".
3. See the first four paragraphs of the preceding item.
4. The Muslim League claimed that the Andaman and Nicobar Islands should form part of Pakistan on the grounds that they never formed part of India historically or geographically, they were not in the same category as the other Chief Commissioner's provinces, the population of these islands consisted of tribes who were not connected with the peoples of India by ethnical, religious or cultural ties, and these islands would serve to provide a channel of communication between the two parts of Pakistan and also serve as refuelling bases for vessels plying between them as they occupied "an important strategic position on the sea route involved"

*Clauses 3 and 4:—*

We have no objection to the decisions of the Boundary Commission, being treated as awards binding on all concerned.<sup>5</sup>

*Clause 6(2):—*

We have made a similar recommendation.<sup>6</sup>

*Clauses 9 and 11:—*

There is no reason why the Governor-General should not act on the advice of Ministers. If the Ministers of the two Dominions differ in respect of some order which concerns both, the matter may go to arbitration.<sup>7</sup>

We have already agreed that the period mentioned in sub-clause (5) of clause 9 may be extended to March 31, 1948.

The powers of repeal and amendment of the Legislatures of the Dominions extend only to their respective territories. It is unnecessary to restrict them in any way.<sup>8</sup>

*Clause 19 (3) Proviso.—*

It is unnecessary specifically to provide in the Bill who the appropriate authority to negotiate with the tribal areas on the N.W.F. or elsewhere should be; no such provision has been made in respect of the Indian States.<sup>9</sup>

5. The Muslim League said that these clauses "fail to embody the agreement that the Governor-General is bound to accept and give effect to the awards" of the Boundary Commissions
6. The Muslim League had demanded that it might be clarified that "the legislatures of either Dominion would be competent *inter alia* to pass any Act which may be repugnant to the provisions of the Indian Independence Act, 1947 or to amend or repeal this Act"
7. The Muslim League demanded that "where the order or other act concerns both Dominions the Governor-General would exercise the powers ... in his individual judgment, i.e., he would not be bound by the advice of ministers in this regard."
8. The Muslim League had commented: "In sub-clause (4) of clause 9, it should be made clear that until the 31st of March, 1948, the powers of repeal and amendment possessed by the legislatures of the two Dominions would not extend to orders of the Governor-General which concern both of the Dominions"
9. The Muslim League wanted specific provision in the Bill that "the appropriate authority to negotiate with the tribal areas on the N.W. Frontier shall be the Dominion in which the N.W.F.P. is included. The same principle applies to the tribal areas in Baluchistan and on the N.E. Frontier of India"

*General:*

We strongly object to H.M.G. or any other external authority undertaking to enforce the awards made by the Boundary Commissions or any arbitration tribunals that may be set up in future. The implementing of the awards should be left to the good sense of the two States concerned, as in the case of any two independent States <sup>10</sup>

- 10 The Muslim League considered that H.M.G. was the only appropriate authority that should undertake and guarantee that the awards that might be made by the Boundary Commissions and the Arbitration Tribunal would be given effect to and carried out in all respects

**21. To Lord Ismay<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
5th July 1947

Dear Lord Ismay,

I am sending you a brief note on the Indian Independence Bill.<sup>2</sup> I have purposely only referred to three matters which we consider very important. Further amplification of these matters has been given in our previous note<sup>3</sup> which was sent to H.M.G. I should like to emphasise that we attach great importance to these proposed changes

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Papers, N M M L.

2 See *post*, item 23.

3 See *ante*, item 19

**22. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
5th July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I enclose a brief note on the Indian Independence Bill, as presented to Parliament.<sup>2</sup> A copy of this is being sent to Lord Ismay. I suggest that

1 J N Papers, N M M L.

2 See the following item

the contents of this note might be sent by telegram to avoid delay. We recognise that nothing should be done to delay the passage of the Bill, but we are strongly of opinion that the changes suggested by us should be incorporated in the Bill

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 23. Note on the Draft Indian Independence Bill<sup>1</sup>

While some of the suggestions have been accepted, the more important amendments required have not been given effect to.<sup>2</sup> We think that the non-inclusion of these amendments is very unfortunate and likely to lead to grave difficulties

2. Even if there were no two Bills, as suggested by us, it should have been made perfectly clear that the international personality of the existing India continues and that India continues to be the parent State exercising all its rights and performing all its obligations under international treaties, etc.

3. In the Bill the argument might be advanced that the Dominion of India is only one of 564 major and minor fragments into which the Bill has divided India. This argument may be met by adducing various considerations, but the definition should have been so clear as to prevent the possibility of doubt or argument.

4. In clause 7(1) (b) and (c) a proviso has now been inserted.<sup>3</sup> But

1. This is reproduced in Mountbatten's telegram to Listowel dated 5 July 1947 printed in *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 937-938
2. For the suggestions of the Congress in regard to the Draft Bill see *ante*, item 19 and for the Draft Bill showing the changes made to it on the suggestions of the Indian leaders see *The Transfer of Power*, Vol 11, pp 779-794
3. The proviso inserted in paragraphs (b) and (c) of clause 7(1), according to which the suzerainty of His Majesty over the Indian States and any treaties or agreements between His Majesty and the tribal areas were to lapse from 15 August 1947, laid down that these paragraphs would be effective provided agreements relating to customs, transit and communications, posts and telegraphs, or other like matters, were given effect to until they were denounced by any of the concerned parties or superseded by subsequent agreements

this does not go far enough and even this is subject to unilateral denunciation by any party. The effects of this are very difficult to foresee. We think it essential that the proviso should be in the form suggested by us previously.

5. The proviso to clause 19(3) has been retained almost in its original form. The change made does not go far enough and the difficulties pointed out in our previous note remain. We think it necessary that the proviso should be as suggested by us in our previous note. It must be made perfectly clear that the powers of the existing Constituent Assembly are in no way reduced by this Bill.

## 24, To Jayaprakash Narayan<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

5th July 1947

My dear Jayaprakash,

I have received your letter of the 3rd July. I am very glad that you have decided to allow members of the Socialist Party to join the Constituent Assembly<sup>2</sup>. We shall welcome the persons you have suggested<sup>3</sup> and we shall try to get them in, but I may point out that it is no easy matter now for vacancies to be created or to be filled. This is largely a provincial matter and there is a tremendous desire among Congressmen to come into the Constituent Assembly, more especially as this is going to function as a Legislative Assembly. It is difficult to issue orders from here as to who should be elected and who should not. In some provinces it will be relatively easier than in others. So far as I know, there are not likely to be many vacancies, as most people want to stick on to the Constituent Assembly anyhow.

I have sent a copy of your letter to Rajendra Babu

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, N M M L
2. Jayaprakash had informed Nehru that the National Executive of the Socialist Party had allowed, in the changed circumstances, its members to join the Constituent Assembly if invited to do so.
3. The names recommended by Jayaprakash Narayan were Acharya Narendra Deva, Aruna Asaf Ali, Ram Manohar Lohia, Purshottam Trikamdas, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, Rao Patwardhan, Asoka Mehta and Achyut Patwardhan.

## 25. A Monroe Doctrine for Asia<sup>1</sup>

The 15th of August is a great day not only in the history of India or Asia, but in that of the entire world.

August 15 marks the definite and final end of an era of imperialism started by the British nearly 150 years ago. The form of exploitation which was practised first by the British and later adopted by other imperialist nations of Europe will terminate in principle, and to a large degree in practice also, by the declaration of Indian independence.

India's freedom is linked with the freedom of a number of other countries. The exploitation of India gave an excuse to some foreign Powers to dominate the weak nations of Asia. Some small countries were kept under British control because they happened to fall in the route from England to India. All these nations, too, will now gradually get out of the clutches of the imperialists.

India is sure to play a significant role in international politics. Already, she has raised her voice for the protection of Indonesia's liberty. In connection with the Indonesian question, I have already said that foreign armies have no business to stay on the soil of an Asian country.<sup>2</sup> The doctrine expounded by President Monroe had saved America from foreign aggression for nearly a 100 years, and now the time has come when a similar doctrine must be expounded with respect to Asian countries.

Charges of breaches of faith against each other have been levelled by the Republicans and the Dutch Governments. Without going into the merits of their individual cases, I am opposed in principle to letting the armies of one country stay in another. This is basically wrong and, once that is conceded, the Dutch have no case to put forth. Holland, which had failed to protect itself only a few years ago, has no right to reinstate itself as an imperialist nation. The success of the Indonesians will depend on their own strength. But let me make it clear once and for all that we shall not tolerate foreign armies operating in Asian countries.

Seeing the situation in India I can say that our joy on the present occasion is mingled with sorrow. I am happy that the "Quit India" movement which started five years ago has terminated successfully. But I am

1 Speech at a public meeting to celebrate the Liberty Week, New Delhi, 9 August 1947. From *The Hindustan Times* and *The Statesman*, 10 August 1947 and *The Hindu*, 11 August 1947.

2 See *ante*, section 1, item 38.



sad that the picture of the free India has not come out as I had hoped it would. The British authority is departing, no doubt, but it is leaving in its wake problems of great magnitude. The division of India is a great shock to all those who have worked for a strong united India. But the Congress has to agree to it because there is no other alternative. I would not have minded so much if the country had been divided politically, but unfortunately division has taken place in the hearts of the people of India.

It was India's misfortune that during the last few years of her life, some leaders had widely preached the gospel of hate and had incited innocent people to commit acts which brought nothing but degradation to the country. This was serious because feelings of hatred and distrust cannot be overcome easily.

Various reasons had forced the Congress to accept the division of India. We accepted partition so that India may be free. The demand for partition was strong from Bengal and the Punjab. The people said that to end the massacre that was going on in these two provinces it was essential to divide them. No Bengalee or Punjabi would have said this unless he was forced to do so. The very same people who vigorously opposed the partition of Bengal about 40 years ago, asked us to divide the province. Secondly, the Congress has to face the fact that certain sections of the people do not want to remain with the rest of India. Unity is a good thing but it cannot be achieved merely by resolutions. Men and women must accept it too, and the Congress has realised that division is better than a union of unwilling parts. Now that Bengal and the Punjab are being partitioned there are people who say that we should not have agreed to division. There are occasions when we have to choose between the lesser of two evils.

So far as I am personally concerned, I take full responsibility for all that I did during the past 16 months. Circumstances forced me to do what was very painful.

The use of violence at this time to maintain Indian unity will have disastrous results. Civil war will check the progress of India for a long time to come and the problem before India is of such a serious nature that no delay can be tolerated.

I hope that new relations will be established between the two divided parts of India and a better understanding will ultimately mitigate the evils of division.

During the last one year, the people of India have lost considerably in prestige as a result of the communal frenzy and they have now developed a narrow sectarian outlook. The Government have extensive plans before them for the development of the country, but that narrow outlook has prevented those plans from being put into practice.

I am in favour of giving better wages to workers. But before I can do that, the national exchequer must have the money to pay those increased wages and salaries. The prime need of the country at this time is to increase its wealth, for which production should be pushed up by all possible means. Anybody today who, even with genuine grievances, strikes work is stabbing the people in the back.

## 26. A Tryst with Destiny<sup>1</sup>

Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially. At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance. It is fitting that at this solemn moment we take the pledge of dedication to the service of India and her people and to the still larger cause of humanity.

At the dawn of history India started on her unending quest, and trackless centuries are filled with her striving and the grandeur of her successes and her failures. Through good and ill fortune alike she has never lost sight of that quest or forgotten the ideals which gave her strength. We end today a period of ill fortune and India discovers herself again. The achievement we celebrate today is but a step, an opening of opportunity, to the greater triumphs and achievements that await us. Are we brave enough and wise enough to grasp this opportunity and accept the challenge of the future?

Freedom and power bring responsibility. That responsibility rests upon this Assembly, a sovereign body representing the sovereign people of India. Before the birth of freedom we have endured all the pains of labour, and our hearts are heavy with the memory of this sorrow. Some of those pains continue even now. Nevertheless the past is over and it is the future that beckons to us now.

<sup>1</sup> Speech in the Constituent Assembly at midnight of 14-15 August 1947 on the eve of independence, *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report*, Vol V, 1947, pp. 4-5

That future is not one of ease or resting but of incessant striving so that we might fulfil the pledges we have so often taken and the one we shall take today. The service of India means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity. The ambition of the greatest man of our generation has been to wipe every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us but as long as there are tears and suffering, so long our work will not be over.

And so we have to labour and to work and work hard to give reality to our dreams. Those dreams are for India, but they are also for the world, for all the nations and peoples are too closely knit together today for anyone of them to imagine that it can live apart. Peace has been said to be indivisible, so is freedom, so is prosperity now, and so also is disaster in this one world that can no longer be split into isolated fragments.

To the people of India, whose representatives we are, we make appeal to join us with faith and confidence in this great adventure. This is no time for petty and destructive criticism, no time for ill will or blaming others. We have to build the noble mansion of free India where all her children may dwell.

I beg to move, Sir,

"That it be resolved that.

(1) After the last stroke of midnight, all members of the Constituent Assembly present on this occasion do take the following pledge.

At this solemn moment when the people of India, through suffering and sacrifice, have secured freedom, I, . . ., a member of the Constituent Assembly of India, do dedicate myself in all humility to the service of India and her people to the end that this ancient land attain her rightful place in the world and make her full and willing contribution to the promotion of world peace and the welfare of mankind.

(2) Members who are not present on this occasion do take the pledge (with such verbal changes at the President may prescribe) at the time they next attend a session of the Assembly."

Long years ago we made a solemn  
 destiny, and now the time comes when we  
 shall redeem our pledge, not too wholly or  
 in full measure, but very substantially. At  
 the stroke of the midnight hour, when the  
 world sleeps, India will awake to life  
 and freedom. A moment comes, which  
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 age ends, and when the soul of a nation,  
 long suppressed, finds utterance. It is  
 fitting that at this solemn moment we take  
 the pledge of dedication to the service of India  
 and her people and to  
 the still larger cause of humanity.

At the dawn of history India  
 started on her unending quest, and  
 trackless centuries are filled with her  
 striving <sup>and</sup> ~~with~~ her magnificent successes  
 and her failures. ~~But~~ things good or ill  
 fortune alike she has never lost sight of!  
 That quest or forgotten the ideals which  
 gave her strength. We end today a  
 period of ill fortune and India <sup>discovers</sup> ~~finds~~  
 herself again. The achievement we  
 celebrate today is but a step, an

opening of opportunity, the greater  
 triumphs and achievements that lie  
 in wait for us. Are we brave  
 and wise enough  
 enough to grasp this opportunity and  
 accept the challenge of the future?

~~This moment is a moment~~

Freedom and power bring  
 responsibility. That responsibility rests  
 upon this Assembly, a sovereign body  
 representing the sovereign people of India.  
 Before the birth of freedom we have  
 endured all the pains of labour  
 and our hearts are heavy with the  
 memory of this sorrow. ~~That the~~  
 past is over and it is the future.

{ Some of those pains  
 continue even now.  
 Nevertheless

that beckons to us now. ~~It is a~~  
~~future~~ [That future is not one of  
 ease or resting but of incessant  
 striving so that we might fulfil the  
 pledge we have so often taken and then  
 one we shall take today. ~~That~~ The  
 service of India means the service  
 of the millions who suffer. It means  
 the ending of poverty and ignorance  
 and disease and inequality of  
 opportunity. The ~~aspiration~~ <sup>main</sup> ambition of the  
 greatest of our generation has been  
 to wipe every tear from every eye.  
 That may be beyond us but it

There are tears and suffering our work  
is not over.

And so we have to labor and to work  
and work hard to bring some reality to our  
dreams. These dreams are for India, but  
they are also for the world, for all the  
nations and peoples are too closely knit  
together today for any one of them to  
imagine that it can live apart. Peace  
has been said to be indivisible, so is  
freedom, so is prosperity, <sup>now</sup> and so also is  
disaster in this One World that  
can no longer be split up into  
isolated fragments.

To the people of India, whose representatives  
we are, we make appeal to join  
us with ~~our~~ faith and confidence in  
this great adventure. This is no time  
for petty and ~~destructive~~ <sup>destructive</sup> criticism, ~~the~~  
No time for ill will or blaming others. We  
have ~~to build~~ <sup>to build</sup> ~~construct~~ to build  
the noble mansion of free India  
where all her children may dwell.

I beg to move, Sir, that it be

Now Resolved that -

(1) after the half stroke of midnight, all  
members of the Constituent Assembly

present on this occasion do take the following pledge: -

"At this solemn moment when the people of India, by their suffering and sacrifice, have secured freedom and become masters of their own destiny, I, - . . . . ., a member of the Constituent Assembly of India, do dedicate myself (for service of India and her people to the end "that this ancient land attain ~~to~~ her rightful and honored place in the world and make her full and willing <sup>contribution</sup> ~~contribution~~ to the promotion of world peace and the welfare of mankind";

members who are not present on this occasion do take the pledge (with such verbal changes as the President may prescribe) at the time they next attend a session of the Assembly

## 27. Face the New Tasks with Determination<sup>1</sup>

Fellow countrymen,

It has been my privilege to serve India and the cause of India's freedom for many years. Today I address you for the first time officially as the first servant of the Indian people, pledged to their service and their betterment. I am here because you willed it so and I remain here so long as you choose to honour me with your confidence. We are a free and sovereign people today and we have rid ourselves of the burden of the past. We look at the world with clear and friendly eyes and at the future with faith and confidence. The burden of foreign domination is done away with, but freedom brings its own responsibilities and burdens and they can only be shouldered in the spirit of a free people, self-disciplined and determined to preserve and enlarge that freedom. We have achieved much, we have to achieve much more. Let us then address ourselves to our new tasks with the determination and adherence to high principles which our great leader has taught us.

Mahatma Gandhi is fortunately with us to guide and inspire and ever to point out to us the path of high endeavour. He taught us long ago that ideals and objectives can never be divorced from the methods adopted to realise them, that worthy ends can only be achieved through worthy means. If we aim at the big things of life, if we dream of India as a great nation giving her age-old message of peace and freedom to others, then we have to be big ourselves and worthy children of mother India. The eyes of the world are upon us, watching this birth of freedom in the East and wondering what it means.

Our first and immediate objective must be to put an end to all internal strife and violence which disfigure and degrade us and injure the cause of freedom. They come in the way of consideration of the great economic problems of the masses of the people which so urgently demand attention. Our long subjection and the World War and its aftermath have made us inherit an accumulation of vital problems; and today our people lack food and clothing and other necessities and we are caught in a spiral of inflation and rising prices. We cannot solve these problems suddenly but we cannot also delay their solution. So we must plan wisely so that the burdens on the masses may grow less, and

1. Broadcast to the nation, New Delhi 15 August 1947



their standards of living go up. We wish ill to none. But it must be clearly understood that the interests of our long-suffering masses must come first and every entrenched interest that comes in their way must yield to them. We have to change rapidly our antiquated land tenure system and we have also to promote industrialisation on a large and balanced scale so as to add to the wealth of the country and thus to the national dividend which can be equitably distributed.

Production today is the first priority and every attempt to hamper or lessen production is injuring the nation and is more especially harmful to our labouring masses. But production by itself is not enough, for this may lead to an even greater concentration of wealth in a few hands, which comes in the way of progress and which, in the context of today, produces instability and conflict. Therefore, fair and equitable distribution is essential for any solution of the problem.

The Government of India have in hand at present several vast schemes for developing river valleys by controlling the flow of rivers, building dams and reservoirs and irrigation works and developing hydro-electric power. These will lead to greater food production and to the growth of industry and to all-round development. These schemes are thus basic to all planning and we intend to complete them as rapidly as possible so that the masses may profit. All this requires peaceful conditions and the cooperation of all concerned, and hard and continuous work. Let us then address ourselves to these great and worthy tasks, and forget our mutual wrangling and conflicts. There is a time for quarrelling, and there is a time for cooperative endeavour, there is a time for work and there is a time for play. Today there is no time for quarrelling or overmuch play, unless we prove false to our country and our people. Today we must cooperate with each other, and work together and work with right goodwill.

I should like to address a few words to our services, civil and military. The old distinctions and differences are gone, and today we are all free sons and daughters of India, proud of our country's freedom and joining together in our service to her. Our common allegiance is to India. In the difficult days ahead our services and our experts have a vital role to fulfil and we invite them to do so as comrades in the service of India.

*Jai Hind!*

# THE CONSEQUENCES OF PARTITION

# 1. The Administrative Consequences of Partition<sup>1</sup>

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Pandit Nehru said that he did not understand the reference to a "division of the staff, organisations and records of Central Civil Departments." As he saw it, there was at present an entity of India. Certain parts of India were being given the opportunity to secede from this entity. The functions of the Government of India would continue. The seceding parts would have to build up their own Government.

Mr. Jinnah said that he and Pandit Nehru were starting off from completely different premises. It was not a question of secession, but of division.

Pandit Nehru said that he did not agree. It was a fundamental point that India, as such, would continue.<sup>2</sup>

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Pandit Nehru asked how it was intended to carry on Government during the period from the decision on partition, which would probably take place towards the end of June, until the two new Dominion Governments were set up—a period of, say, six weeks. When the partition decision was reached, a vital change would have taken place. The two new States would already then come into existence in embryo. When this happened, the whole nature of the Government of India would change. Some arrangements would then have to be made immediately, as certain Members of the Interim Government would be interested in one State

- 1 Here are printed extracts from two reports of the deliberations at Mountbatten's sixteenth miscellaneous meeting held on 5 June 1947. The first report is in the minutes of the meeting and the second is in Mountbatten's personal report No. 8, printed in *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 11, pp. 137-142 and 164 respectively. The meeting was attended among others by Mountbatten, Nehru, Jinnah, Liaquat Ali and Ismay. Mountbatten asked whether the matters on which a decision by agreement or arbitration would have to be reached had been correctly set out in the paper "The Administrative Consequences of Partition" handed over to the Indian leaders on 3 June 1947.
- 2 Mountbatten explained that it would be necessary for those members of the staff of Central Civil Departments who lived in Pakistan to transfer to the Pakistan service.

and some in the other. There would be a complete division of interest. It would become very difficult to carry on as at present. Arrangements would have to be made so that neither side would feel that the other was interfering in their business. The question definitely arose as to how the processes of Government could be carried on from then onwards<sup>3</sup>

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Paragraph 3 of the paper before the meeting read "Similar decisions will be necessary as between parts of Provinces". Pandit Nehru gave his opinion that the problem of the division of provincial subjects was part of the main central problem. He did not agree that the Governors of the provinces concerned should be solely responsible.

Mr. Jinnah said that there were many things to do. He wanted to try to understand which was the first. They could not all be done at once.

Mountbatten suggested that the first step should be to set up a Partition Committee<sup>4</sup>. . . . The Partition Tribunal would decide the order of priority with which to deal with the various other matters.

At first Mr. Jinnah took the line that no steps could be taken, not even with regard to setting up the Partition Tribunal, until the respective Constituent Assemblies were complete. Later, however, he agreed to the suggestion that the Partition Tribunal should be set up forthwith. He referred to the representatives appointed by either side to the Partition Tribunal as "quasiarbitrators." He was, at first, in favour of only one member being nominated by each side, but later agreed to two; and that a third substitute should be nominated in case of sickness. Pandit Nehru also agreed with this. It was further agreed that the members of the Partition Tribunal should be the highest political leaders. Mr. Jinnah was violently opposed to this that there should be a fifth member of the tribunal in the shape of a minority representative.

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Pandit Nehru said that he disagreed that the functions of Government could be completely stopped during the interim period, as he had

3 Mountbatten said that as the interim period before the transfer of power was to be very short this question should be considered separately at a later stage.

4 Later it was provisionally decided to call this Committee the Partition Tribunal. But ultimately a Partition Council was set up on 27 June 1947 with Mountbatten as Chairman and Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Jinnah, Liaquat Ali and Baldev Singh as its members. Its main object was to establish peaceful conditions so that the process of partition might be completed and urgent tasks of administration and reconstruction taken in hand.

understood Mr. Jinnah to suggest.<sup>5</sup> He further stated that he considered that the All-India Congress Committee and the All-India Muslim League Council should ratify the appointment of the members of the Partition Tribunal and of the Umpire.

Mr. Jinnah suggested that the decisions reached by the Partition Tribunal should be signed by the members thereof, who would afterwards be bound to see that their respective Constituent Assemblies ratified them

The Viceroy pointed out that the existing Constituent Assembly could immediately ratify agreements on behalf of Hindustan. Pandit Nehru agreed that the Hindustan Constituent Assembly might want to have a say in the matter. He asked what would happen to the Partition Tribunal after Dominion Status had come into operation. The general feeling of the meeting was that the two new Governments would then have to decide whether to continue the previous system, or whether to change it.

The Viceroy stated that His Majesty's Government had declared themselves averse to his acting as Umpire, empowered to give a final decision. He also was averse to this procedure. . . . He suggested that a man experienced in judiciary affairs would be most suitable. With this suggestion there was general agreement. The Viceroy said that he was prepared to enter the discussions if required by both sides, but not to give final decisions. All the leaders at the meeting expressed their complete agreement that the Viceroy should not be the Umpire.

It was provisionally decided that the next highest Committee should be called the "Steering Committee."

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Pandit Nehru was opposed to the suggestion that a Joint Secretariat should take the place of the Steering Committee.<sup>6</sup> He considered that the Partition Tribunal would be unable to cope with its task unless there was a whole-time intermediate Committee immediately subordinate to it to undertake all functions except the final decision.

Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan suggested that the Steering Committee should consist of experts or officials

Pandit Nehru said that he considered that reference to "officials" or "non-officials" was confusing. He agreed, however, that the Steering Committee should be composed of experts. It was, he suggested, up to

5 Jinnah had said that the existing executive and legislature could not take up any question of policy or planning

6. Ismay had suggested that the intermediate body, instead of being called "Steering Committee", should be a Joint Secretariat. Jinnah had agreed

the two sides to nominate anybody they wished to serve on this Committee.

Lord Ismay suggested a further alternative—that the Steering Committee should consist of two political leaders as joint chairmen and, for its members, the chairmen of the sub-committees. The general feeling of the meeting was opposed to this suggestion although it was considered that the chairmen of the sub-committees might well be *ex officio* members of the Steering Committee.

The Viceroy said that he was inclined to agree with the Congress viewpoint that something more than a Joint Secretariat would be required.

The meeting agreed that the Viceroy should give an account of the decisions reached, in the form of a written paper, at the Cabinet meeting the following day

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The Viceroy suggested that the Boundary Commissions should not, as was envisaged in the paper before the meeting, report through the Steering Committee and the Partition Tribunal to the Governor-General, but rather that it should report direct. This suggestion was generally accepted ...

## II

31 This morning I held my third meeting with the leaders to discuss the paper on the administrative consequences of partition. We made very slow progress as each side appeared to be anxious to make political speeches. Jinnah was at pains to explain that both States would be independent and equal in every way. Nehru pointed out that the whole basis of approach must be different, India was continuing in every way the same, and the fact that dissident provinces were to be allowed to secede must not interrupt the work of the Government of India or its foreign policy. Feeling was very tense.

32 Both sides were still very anxious to obtain my services as arbitrator in all matters of dispute in working out the partition. But I pointed out that since both sides were already approaching the problem from such widely divergent points of view it was clear that I should have to give a decision which one side or the other side would dislike practically every day, and however much they now professed to believe in my impartiality, such a procedure could not fail to undermine their confidence in me within a very short time. I therefore felt I should not be of much use to them in this capacity and I am glad to say they agreed to try and find a mutually acceptable High Court Judge to fulfil this role.

## 2. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
5 June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I have given a great deal of thought to the talks we had at this morning's conference and I feel that it would be desirable to clarify the position further. I am afraid I do not like at all the idea of carrying on more or less in our present way for another two months. This is not merely a question of time; but deeper issues are involved. I shall, of course, discuss this matter with V.P. Menon when he comes to see me. May I suggest to you to discuss this matter with Krishna Menon who might perhaps be able to help? I understand that some discussions on these subjects took place with him in London.<sup>2</sup>

2. I have had occasion to discuss briefly with a few of my colleagues the proposals to form Partition Councils and the like. Their reactions confirmed my own way of thinking on the subject. We propose to consider this matter more fully tomorrow with our colleagues, and if necessary I shall let you know what they think about it. It is obviously a vital matter and it may make a great deal of difference.

3. As I view it, we are trying to provide a procedure for two Governments or two embryo Governments to settle this question of division. We should, therefore, follow the normal procedure in such cases, i.e., representatives of Governments should meet together and come to political decisions. Essentially most of the decisions will be political and only some of a judicial character. In case of lack of agreement on a particular point, the matter might be referred to a Tribunal which may be created previously for this purpose. I should like to separate the Tribunal from the high-powered supervising political committee representing the two embryo States. Mixing the two functions up does not appear to be desirable.

4. The representatives of the two embryo States may for the present be representatives of the major parties. They should function normally as such representatives do, that is to say they will take their directions from their principals whenever necessary. Those principals may even change

1 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 148-149.

2 Krishna Menon had gone to London on 17 May 1947 as Nehru's personal representative when Mountbatten went to London for talks with the British Cabinet.

their representatives if they consider it necessary just as representatives of Governments may be changed. This will give reality to the picture and the Committee or council will be in close touch with the forces that matter in dealing with political problems. To appoint a permanent committee with full powers would be to isolate it from those forces.

5. Thus I would suggest that there should be a Partition Council consisting of four persons or some such number. This council will be the final authority subject to disputed matters being referred to a separate Tribunal of say three senior judges whose decision on those points should be final. Then there would be a Steering Committee and the other committees as proposed this morning.

6. This would involve a separation of the judicial and political functions and instead of an umpire we would have a small *ad hoc* judicial tribunal for special purposes referred to it.

7. These are my personal suggestions for the present. As I have said above, I am discussing this matter more fully with my colleagues

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 3. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
6th June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I have consulted some of my colleagues in the Cabinet and others this morning about the proposals for dividing assets, etc. They raised many important questions which were not easy to answer. The first question that arose was about the relation between the partitioning organization and the Cabinet. Where does the Interim Government come into the picture? Normally in such a governmental matter it is the Government that should take the lead as the final authority. In view of the fact, however, that divisions have to be made between an existing State and an embryo State, some procedure may be desirable to avoid decisions in vital matters by majority. There may be provision for arbitration in regard to specific matters which may arise.

<sup>1</sup> J.N. Collection



It is probable that this business of division and partitioning will absorb the energies and attention of a considerable part of the administrative apparatus of Government. Will this be functioning more or less independently of the Cabinet or even of their official heads? Obviously this will create difficulties and the Government will tend to fade away from the picture giving place to some kind of a super-Government in regard to these special matters.

All these and like questions arise and have to be answered. I understand that the matter is coming up before the Cabinet this evening.<sup>2</sup> Some of our colleagues will raise these questions then and I thought that previous intimation of this should be given to you.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

- 2 At this meeting of the Cabinet held on 6 June 1947 it was agreed that a committee of the Cabinet should be set up with Mountbatten as Chairman to work out the machinery for implementing the partition. Next day at the Viceroy's seventeenth miscellaneous meeting it was agreed that the above committee should consist of four members—two from the Congress and two from the Muslim League.

#### 4. To M. Chalapathi Rau<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
6 June 1947

My dear Chalapathi,

I have not met you for a long time. I feel we should meet and have a talk about the new situation that has arisen. When it is convenient to you I should like you to come here.

2. There are one or two matters which, I think, should be stressed repeatedly. There is far too much talk of the partition of India. This may be correct in a way. The real position is and should be described as a secession from India of a certain part India, in theory and in practice, nationally and internationally continues as an entity except for the fact that some parts go out of it. This aspect of the question should be frequently brought out as many people appear to be misled. The present Government of India continues even after the secession. The fact that there will be Dominion Status then does not affect the concept of India. Our Ambassadors, Ministers, etc., continue to represent us. Our membership of the U.N.O. continues as before

1. J.N. Collection.

3. On the other hand Pakistan has to be built up from the foundations. It may develop its external relations as it likes. Thus the existing State of India continues with necessary adaptations due to the secession. The Pakistan State, however, is something new which gradually takes shape.

4. Because of this viewpoint, which I think is correct and certainly desirable, I think it is unfortunate to talk of the division of India into Pakistan and Hindustan as if two new States came into existence.

5. In regard to the Indian States it should be pointed out clearly, politely, but emphatically that it is an absurd contention for any one of them to consider themselves independent. In theory we do not agree to it and in practice any such attempt will be faced with enormous difficulties. From any point of view India cannot tolerate such independent pockets. Any declaration of independence by a State is an expression of hostility to the Indian Union, however politely it might be phrased. We can neither accept this independence nor the special relations of any such State with a foreign Power. We want to treat the States gently as far as possible, but we cannot give up fundamental principles for which we stand either in regard to their status or in regard to the measure of autonomy and responsible government that must exist there.

6 There is some confusion in people's minds about our accepting Dominion Status, and some people imagine that it is giving up of the claim for complete independence. This is absurd. The Constituent Assembly has declared our objective to be a sovereign independent republic. The British Government have announced their intention to quit completely by June 1948. Neither of these is affected by the proposed new arrangement. Dominion Status now or in August is really something more, during this interim period, than what the British said they would do. It is an ex-gratia gift, no doubt advantageous in the long run to Britain because it increases her prestige and helps to produce goodwill for her in India. It does not take away from our objective of independence which we shall, no doubt, declare when our new constitution is complete. Meanwhile the new arrangement is obviously helpful to us in many ways as an interim arrangement.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 5. Envoy to Russia<sup>1</sup>

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13. Nehru then announced that he had a number of diplomatic appointments which were awaiting confirmation and that whereas he did not mind placing them before the Cabinet, he trusted I would rule that they did not concern Pakistan. Liaquat objected and hinted that Pakistan would not wish to have an Ambassador appointed to Russia. As Nehru's own sister, Mrs. Pandit, has been proposed for this appointment, this remark was particularly tactless, though Liaquat afterwards assured me that he had no idea that Mrs. Pandit had been nominated. Anyway, there was a tremendous scene when Nehru announced that he would not tolerate interference by the League in the affairs of the Government, and that he would insist on matters like this being put to the majority vote and would see that the League was outvoted every time. When Liaquat replied equally violently, Nehru then said that if the Government were to be turned over to the League he himself would forthwith resign from the Government. Pandemonium then broke loose and everyone talked at once.

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<sup>1</sup> Record of the Cabinet meeting, 6 June, in Viceroy's Personal Report, 12 June 1947. Extracts *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 11, p. 303.

## 6. Authority for Arranging Partition<sup>1</sup>

Pandit Nehru said that there were various authorities in law—for instance His Majesty's Government, the Governor-General and the Governor-General-in-Council. In law, however, the Presidents of Congress and the

<sup>1</sup> Minutes of Viceroy's seventeenth miscellaneous meeting, 7 June 1947. Extracts *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 11, pp. 184-189. Here is printed the discussion on which authority, in case partition was decided upon, would be responsible for making arrangements for the same.

Muslim League<sup>2</sup> counted for nothing. They only came into the discussions because they represented powerful forces. Therefore, Mr. Jinnah was out of court.

\* \* \* \*

Jinnah said that if the Governor-General-in-Council went beyond the limits of the Government of India Act, he, as a citizen, would come in and challenge his authority.

Pandit Nehru said that this question might arise if and when any legal action was taken, but meanwhile it did not arise

\* \* \* \*

Jinnah repeated that it was the Governor-General who had the authority and the responsibility and the power.

Pandit Nehru pointed out that, if the Governor-General went beyond the scope of the Government of India Act, he could be called to account. If he interfered with any Department of the Government beyond the limit of his powers, he would be infringing the Act<sup>3</sup>

\* \* \* \*

2 J B Kripalani and M A Jinnah

3 In the end it was agreed that legal opinion should be obtained on this issue

## 7. Telegram to Asaf Ali<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram No. 454 dated June 2nd. Situation in certain parts of India tense, particularly in Punjab but no danger of large-scale disturbances. On the whole new proposals received well though critically. They have had a quietening effect on the situation

2. During June Punjab and Bengal legislatures will decide about future of those two provinces. It is possible, though unlikely, that majority may decide in favour of keeping provinces united and within the Union. In spite of that open to one part to decide in favour of partition

1 7 June 1947 Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No 612-FEA/47, p 1, National Archives of India.

3. Important to bear in mind that in case such partition takes place, it does not materially affect the national and international concept of India or the Government of India. It is in the nature of secession of some parts of India leaving the rest intact and continuing as India. Thus our membership of U.N.O. continues as before, so also our Ambassadors and Ministers. It is open to the new State which is seceding to enter into fresh arrangements with other countries. Our position remains unchanged in regard to those other countries.

## 8. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
10 June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

At this morning's meeting three possibilities were suggested for the formation of the Boundary Commissions.<sup>2</sup> The first one stated that each Commission should consist of three persons obtained through U N O. plus three expert assessors from each side of each partitioned province

2. We have thought over this matter and we think that this suggestion is not feasible or practicable. This would involve considerable delay. The U.N.O. Headquarters would probably have to communicate with each member Government and a long time would elapse before a choice could be made. It is possible that the ultimate choice might not be a very suitable one. There are other considerations also which militate against this proposal. We, therefore, would not welcome it.

3. The second proposal is that each Commission should consist of an independent Chairman and four other persons of whom two would be nominated by the Congress and two by the Muslim League. This proposal, with some slight modification, seems to us suitable. The modification we would suggest is that the four persons nominated by the Congress and the Muslim League should be persons of high judicial standing. These four should elect their own Chairman. If there was any difficulty about their electing their Chairman, the two parties could themselves suggest him.

1 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 241-242

2 See *post*, section 6, item 11 and for full text see *The Transfer of Power*, Vol 11, pp 234-235

4. The third proposal has been partly incorporated in the second and, therefore, I need not say anything about it.

5. We thus approve of the second proposal, as stated above, for the composition of the Boundary Commissions.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 9. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
12th June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

In some of the papers sent to me by Sir Eric Mieville there is a proposal about the Arbitral Tribunal which is meant to decide on matters referred to it by the Partition Council. It is suggested in this note that the tribunal should consist of three men of great judicial experience and that the Chairman of this body should be a member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council

2. My colleagues and I think that the simplest and most effective procedure would be to request the three judges of the Federal Court to function as the Arbitral Tribunal for this purpose. They are all here and are easily accessible and are men of great judicial experience. They would, of course, not function as the Federal Court in this matter. We do not see any particular advantage in asking for a member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council to come to India for this purpose.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, p 291

10. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
12 June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I enclose the terms of reference we suggest for the Boundary Commissions in the Punjab and Bengal<sup>2</sup> You will notice that they are very simple and brief. Indeed they reproduce the language used in paragraph 9 of H.M.G.'s statement of June 3, 1947, without any addition thereto

2. We gave a good deal of thought to this matter and tried to draft fuller terms of reference. We found that in doing so, the result achieved was not very satisfactory. There are all manner of factors which may have to be considered. If we try to make a list of them, it is either too short or too long. It is better, therefore, to leave the matter to the Boundary Commission itself. They will, no doubt, take into consideration all factors they consider relevant

3. The work of these Boundary Commissions is meant to be done fairly rapidly. If we complicate the issues at this stage, their work will be prolonged and final decisions will be delayed. I imagine that if and when two States have been formed, those States will mutually consider modifications and variations of their frontiers so that a satisfactory arrangement might be arrived at. That is likely to be a fairly lengthy process involving the ascertainment of the wishes of the people concerned in any particular area affected. If all this work is entrusted to the Boundary Commissions, their work will be heavy and prolonged. Hence our desire to leave the issues as clear and simple as possible

4. Two particular areas have been mentioned in the course of our conversations—the Thar Parkar district in Sind and some parts of Purnea district in Bihar.<sup>3</sup> I do not know how Purnea district comes into the picture as it is predominantly non-Muslim and is part of a province which is not affected by any secession or partition. Probably it was mentioned because one sub-division of the district has a Muslim majority

<sup>1</sup> *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 292-293

<sup>2</sup> See the succeeding item

<sup>3</sup> On 20 May 1947 Mountbatten had informed the British Cabinet that Nehru had suggested that the Thar Parkar district of Sind, which was a Muslim-majority area but adjoined Kutch and Jodhpur, should be transferred to Jodhpur State, and Jinnah had suggested that, if Bengal was partitioned, those areas of the Purnea district in Bihar which were contiguous to Eastern Bengal should be amalgamated with it

population. It would be laying down a novel principle if we proceeded in regard to other provinces on a basis of small areas less than a district. It would also produce confusion if a new province like Bihar was affected by any such division of a small area. In any event no such division could take place without some kind of a referendum. All this would involve fresh complications and delay

5. So far as Thar Parkar is concerned, it is a district of Sind and can be dealt with as a unit. There also, presumably, it would be necessary to have a referendum such as in Sylhet. On further consideration, however, of this subject, we think that this question should also not be raised at this stage and in this manner. I have, therefore, not mentioned Thar Parkar or Purnea in the terms of reference of the Boundary Commissions.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 11. Terms of Reference for Boundary Commissions<sup>1</sup>

### *For the Punjab*

The Boundary Commission is instructed to demarcate the boundaries of the two parts of the Punjab on the basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims. In doing so it will also take into account other factors

### *For Bengal*

The Boundary Commission is instructed to demarcate the boundaries of the two parts of Bengal on the basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims. In doing so it will also take into account other factors

2. In the event of the referendum in Sylhet district of Assam resulting in favour of amalgamation with eastern Bengal, the Boundary Commission for Bengal will also demarcate the Muslim majority areas of Sylhet district and contiguous Muslim majority areas of adjoining districts.

<sup>1</sup> Enclosure to Nehru's letter to Mountbatten dated 12 June 1947 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 11, p. 293



## 12. Composition of Boundary Commissions<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \* \*

Pandit Nehru gave his opinion that suggestion 'A'<sup>2</sup> above would involve considerable delay. The U.N.O. Headquarters would probably have to communicate with each member Government, and a long time would elapse before a choice could be made. Furthermore, it was possible that the ultimate choice might not be a very suitable one. With regard to suggestion 'B',<sup>3</sup> he proposed that each of the four persons nominated should be of high judicial standing

\* \* \* \*

Pandit Nehru stated his opposition to the suggestion, which had been made by Mr. Jinnah, that the Chairman of the Arbitral Tribunal should be a member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. He suggested instead that the three judges of the Federal Court should constitute the Arbitral Tribunal.<sup>4</sup>

- 1 Minutes of Viceroy's eighteenth miscellaneous meeting, 13 June 1947 Extracts *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 11, p 328.
- 2 "That each (Boundary) Commission should consist of three persons obtained through U N O , plus three expert assessors from each side of each partitioned province."
3. "That each Commission should consist of an independent Chairman and four other persons, of whom two should be nominated by Congress and two by the Muslim League"
- 4 In the end it was agreed that each Boundary Commission should consist of an independent Chairman and four other persons of high judicial standing, of whom two should be nominated by the Congress and two by the Muslim League As for the Arbitral Tribunal it was agreed that Patel and Liaquat Ali should further consider together the composition of the Tribunal and send in their agreed recommendations to Mountbatten. An Arbitral Tribunal was set up by Mountbatten on 12 August 1947 to make awards in respect of the division of assets and liabilities between India and Pakistan Patrick Spens, Chief Justice of India, was appointed its Chairman Harilal Kania, Judge of the Federal Court, and Mohamed Ismail, formerly Judge of the Allahabad High Court, were appointed as Indian and Pakistani members respectively At the same time the Partition Council for India and Pakistan, the Bengal Separation Council, the Punjab Partition Committee and the Assam Separation Council were also set up. All matters of dispute within these were to be referred for adjudication to the Arbitral Tribunal.

### 13. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
14 June 1947

My dear Vallabhbhai,

Yesterday I spoke to you about H.V.R. Iengar. I think he is one of our most capable senior officers and his services should be utilised to the full in the division arrangements now going on. I suppose he could easily do this work in addition to Constituent Assembly work. As a matter of fact I was thinking of him in connection with the new States Department that we were thinking of setting up,<sup>2</sup> but I feel that he might be more useful to you.

I enclose a note which has been sent to me by Brij Narain,<sup>3</sup> a senior officer of the Military Finance Department. There is not very much in this note. Brij Narain, however, seems to me a useful person who can give help and information. He came to me, I think, with a letter from Rajendra Babu. I sent him on to Sardar Baldev Singh. He is well known to V.P. Menon and others. He is at present stationed at Meerut but he spends week-ends in Delhi.

I believe that R.L. Gupta's<sup>4</sup> name has already been mentioned to you as a person who can be of help in various ways. He is Joint Secretary in the Finance Department.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

1 *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol 4, p 548

2 The States Department was formally inaugurated on 5 July 1947 and entrusted to Patel. It took charge of the staff and possessions of the Political Department, Residencies and Agencies of the States.

3 Additional Deputy Financial Adviser, Military Finance, October 1939, Deputy Financial Adviser, Military Finance, 1941-44

4 Raghuvansh Lal Gupta (b 1905); joined Indian Civil Service in 1930 and served in Bihar and Orissa as Assistant Magistrate and Collector; served in the Union Ministry of Finance from 1937-40, Joint Financial Adviser, foreign (food), March 1943-47

### 14 To Sultan Shahrir<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
17th June 1947

My dear Shahrir,

I have received your letter of May 29th from Jakarta.

1 File No 207(III)PS/47-PMS

As you know, we have been intensely occupied here ever since Mountbatten came. As a result of numerous talks we have agreed to a division of India, that is to say to allow certain provinces and parts of provinces to vote themselves out of India if they so choose. Probably this process of voting, etc. will be completed within a month from now. The other process of a division of assets is a much more complicated one and will take longer. But the main picture should be clear enough by the end of July. You will appreciate that the division of the Army offers a formidable difficulty.

We have agreed to this division after much searching of heart and painful thought. For generations past we have dreamt of a free and united India, and for any part of it to go out is most painful to contemplate. Nevertheless we thought that the passions that have been aroused can only be dealt with by as great a measure of forbearance as possible. Countries and peoples sometimes develop psychological attitudes and pathological phases which cannot be dealt with by purely political and logical means. One has to apply to some extent the method of psychoanalysis to them as to individuals. On my part I feel sure that after the present passions have cooled down and a sense of freedom has come to all of us, we shall be able to consider our mutual relations in a better atmosphere and context. Then I think it will be inevitable for close relations to grow up between India and the parts that secede from India.

The effect of this division will be that roughly 20% of the population and area of India will secede and form a new State presumably called Pakistan. There is much talk of Pakistan and Hindustan. Now Hindustan is our normal word in Hindustani for India. But this talk of Hindustan and Pakistan is likely to lead to a misapprehension of the real situation. Legally and constitutionally the position is this India has an international personality and the Government of India continues as before. Our connection with the U.N.O. and with various countries continues without change. Out of India, however, a certain part secedes and is formed into a new State which can cultivate such relations as it likes with other countries. Thus we have the continuing entity of India and a new State of Pakistan. All the treaties and arrangements which India has with other countries remain unchanged.

About the 15th August there will be a major change in our constitutional position. The British Parliament is passing legislation to confer both upon India and the seceding part of it, Dominion Status. How does this Dominion Status fit in with our ideal of an independent Republic? As a matter of fact we adhere as before to our ideal of an independent Republic and our Constituent Assembly has already declared that in a Resolution of Objectives. When our new constitution is ready and we can give effect

to it, I have no doubt that we shall declare India to be a sovereign independent Republic. Even Dominion Status gives that right to complete independence and severance of any connection with Britain. We want to have close relations with Britain in many ways, but we do not want to give up the idea of the Republic. Indeed we could not do so because of the very strong public sentiment in regard to it.

Dominion Status is thus a temporary phase for an interim period to give place to other arrangements later. We have accepted this not in place of the other arrangements but only for the interim period.

Conditions in India have been very peculiar of late. In effect there is no real stable and final authority, although in law there is such an authority. The British Government which is still legally supreme cannot function satisfactorily and the administrative structure is breaking down. On the other hand no new authority can function. Thus there is deterioration and conflict in many places. It has become essential to get over this intervening period by the establishment of full authority in Indian hands. Every day's delay adds to the confusion. Dominion Status, which will give us full authority by August next, will help us to meet these present conditions and to prepare the ground for a final changeover. What exactly our relations will be with the British Commonwealth I cannot just say now. But whatever they may be, I am sure that India will function as an independent Republic.

Perhaps you know that even in the British Dominions there is a strong tendency to loosen the present bonds that exist within the British Commonwealth. Canada and Australia object even to the words 'Dominion' and 'Dominion Status'. It is clear that England has to face very grave situations both in its domestic sphere and internationally. She cannot carry on an empire in any way. She seeks therefore friendly arrangements. The English people have shown better sense in this respect than the Dutch, for the Dutch really are much feebler, and it is fantastic for them to think of holding on to an empire in any way. So also the French who are in trouble everywhere.

I have given you above some brief and rough idea of conditions in India at present so that you may be able to follow events here. We are going to have a difficult time during the next few months, but we are determined to face every difficulty and to overcome it.

I have read with great interest what you have written about conditions and developments in Indonesia.<sup>2</sup> That has helped me to understand the news. This news is disconcerting and I fear you may not have that period of peace for some months which you so badly require. The Dutch, as I have said above, seem to act with a singular lack of sense and appreciation of the world today. Anyhow we have the satisfaction of knowing that the destiny of Indonesia is in wise and capable hands and that out of this difficulty and turmoil of the present, you will win through.

You can rest assured that not only the ardent sympathy of India and of the Indian people is with you, but that we shall help you in every way possible. Certainly in the U.N.O. our delegates will be instructed to help you. India is not at present directly represented on the Security Council. Therefore we cannot raise the question there directly.<sup>3</sup> But whenever an opportunity comes to us, we shall take advantage of it. I shall consult my colleagues and advisers as to what steps we can take either singly or in cooperation with China. If Egypt takes the step you suggest, we shall support Egypt.

We have decided to have a Consulate General at Jakarta and a Consul in Djogjakarta, and we intend sending Panjabi, whom you know, as our Consul General. We have fixed upon Panjabi as he has already come into contact with you and others in Indonesia and knows something of the problem there. I am not sure how far he is approved of by you and your Government. If you have any difficulties or special comments, I hope you will let me know directly. Panjabi will be given very particular directions to cooperate with your Government. He has at present gone to Australia on a food mission. He will return in about two weeks time and soon after we hope to send him to Indonesia.

We shall be very happy to meet you again. I wish I could come to Indonesia but that is not possible at present or in the near future. But I am sure I would some time or other. Yunus has just come here and I enclose a letter from him for you.

2. Shahrir had written that the Dutch could ill afford the maintenance of troops in Indonesia and seemed increasingly inclined to secure a solution by force. While the talks about the implementation of the Linggadjati Agreement remained indecisive, he personally favoured acceptance of the Dutch proposals for the time being so as to avoid fighting during the next few months and thus oblige the Dutch to reduce their military strength, though this approach carried the risk of causing a split within the nationalist ranks.
3. Shahrir had enquired whether, in the event of a sudden Dutch attack, India could raise the matter in the Security Council or make a joint move with China to mediate. He intended to make a similar suggestion to the Egyptian Government.

Please do not hesitate to telegraph or write to me in case you think we can do something for you.

With all good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 15. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
24 June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

You mentioned to me today the proposal that the Pakistan Constituent Assembly might be held in Delhi about the middle of next month. I have thought over this matter and consulted some of my colleagues including Sardar Patel. Their reaction has been entirely unfavourable and I agree with it. After the decisions that have been taken in Bengal<sup>2</sup> and the Punjab,<sup>3</sup> a certain part of India has decided to secede, and in effect Pakistan has come into existence. For the Pakistan Constituent Assembly to meet in Delhi would be odd and out of keeping with these new developments. For it to meet about the same time as the Constituent Assembly of India and possibly in the same building would lead to difficult and embarrassing situations. There is every likelihood of demonstrations and possible rival demonstrations. This might even result in conflict. All this would be a bad beginning for the new order of things. We feel, therefore, that it will be very undesirable for the Pakistan Constituent Assembly to meet in Delhi.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 J N Collection

2 The partition of Bengal was decided upon at a meeting of the members of the Bengal Assembly at Calcutta on 20 June 1947. Members from the non-Muslim-majority areas voted for partition by 58 votes to 21. The members from the Muslim-majority areas gave their verdict against partition by 106 votes to 35. On the same day at a joint meeting of the two Sections 126 members voted for the new Constituent Assembly and 90 for the existing Constituent Assembly.

3 The partition of the Punjab was decided upon at a meeting of the Eastern Section of the Punjab Assembly in Lahore by 50 votes to 22 on 23 June 1947. The Western Punjab Section voted against partition by 69 votes to 27. At a joint session of the two Sections of the Punjab Assembly held at Lahore on 23 June 1947 91 members voted for the new Constituent Assembly and 77 for the existing Constituent Assembly.

16. To S.A. Brelvi<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
26 June 1947

My dear Brelvi,

I am sorry for the delay in answering your letter of the 9th June.<sup>2</sup> Whether Pandit Shukla was serious or not in what he said, I do not know.<sup>3</sup> But anyway I disagree with what he said. So far as I am concerned the two-nation theory does not hold, even though a new state might be carved out of India. Citizenship in India will certainly not be a matter of religion but of fulfilling certain qualifications and of allegiance to the state. You are quite right in saying that the partition, more correctly the segregation, is territorial and not communal, though unfortunately there were communal reasons behind it.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. S.A. Brelvi Papers, N M M L
2. Brelvi, in his letter of 9 June 1947, wanted to know Nehru's reaction to the leading article published in *The Bombay Chronicle* of 9 June 1947 which, while commenting on Ravi Shanker Shukla's speech, argued that India was not being divided on the basis of a two-nation theory. It was only a territorial partition and not a separation of the two communities.
3. In his speech on 6 June 1947 at a meeting of the Hindustani Seva Dal at Nagpur, Ravi Shanker Shukla was reported to have "hinted at the possibility of their (Muslims) losing the rights of citizenship in Hindustan and being treated as any other foreign nationals."

17. To J.B. Kripalani<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
6 July 1947

My dear Jivat,

I have just received your letter of the 5th. Brelvi had sent me this press cutting. He had also sent it to Bapu. Bapu spoke about it at one of his prayer meetings.<sup>2</sup> I sent him a brief reply. It is perfectly true that Jinnah has based his entire case on the two-nation theory. We have not accept-

<sup>1</sup> J.N. Collection

<sup>2</sup> In his speech at the prayer meeting of 16 June 1947, Mahatma Gandhi said that Ravi Shanker Shukla's speech was unfortunate and that Indian provinces had to show by their action that the Muslim members in the provincial cabinets were just as welcome as they were before. This had no reference to the apples of discord which the foreign power had thrown in their midst such as separate electorates.

ed that and I hope we shall not function in accordance with it even after partition. Bapu strongly repudiates that theory as you well know.

It is a little difficult for me to deal with your long letter to Brelvi. There is, of course, a great deal in it with which I agree. But there is something in it which does not wholly fit in with my thinking. I wonder if it is worthwhile for you to answer Brelvi at present at such length. We shall have to deal with these matters constructively in the future and our general policy will have to be laid down then. Perhaps it will be desirable for you to consult Bapu if you have not already done so.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

## 18. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
7 July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Thank you for your letter of the 4th July regarding your discussions with the Sikh leaders<sup>2</sup>

2. We appreciate thoroughly the anxiety of the Sikhs. They have been hard hit by this division. They might be helped somewhat by the decisions of the Boundary Commission. As for assurances in regard to weightage etc. I fear this raises complicated issues. All our troubles, or nearly all, have been due to separate electorates and the system of weightage, originally introduced for the Muslims. It became clear that this did little good to the minority concerned and only created separatist tendencies. The addition of a seat or two makes no essential difference. But it means the acceptance of a fundamentally wrong principle. Once admitted, this principle leads to far-reaching consequences and ill will. It is possible, of course, that without weightage and separate electorates some kind of reservation might be given with freedom to contest the general seats also. We should like to help any minorities getting additional seats from general constituencies

1 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, p. 951.

2. Mountbatten wrote that the Sikh leaders were worried that unless major alterations were made by the Boundary Commission almost half of the Sikh community would remain in the Western Punjab. They sought weightage in the Eastern Punjab and central legislatures and a seat in the Union Government and wanted special representation in the existing Constituent Assembly. They felt that transfer of population should be seriously considered in the Punjab



3. The question of transfer of population does not arise immediately. If the people concerned desire it, it must be seriously considered.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

19. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
13 July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Thank you for your letter of today's date sending me the voting figures in the Sylhet referendum.<sup>2</sup>

2. During the last few days I have received a number of telegrams from Sylhet complaining against a number of malpractices during the referendum. Possibly some of these telegrams were received by you also. Today I had a visit from a deputation from Sylhet consisting of Hindus and Moslems. They placed before me a number of allegations supported by various statements and data which together were formidable. I do not propose to send you now a detailed list of these complaints and the facts which are meant to support them. In brief, they referred to a state of lawlessness during the referendum in the interior of Sylhet district. Most of the polling booths had no proper security arrangements and intimidation was exercised by large numbers of armed Muslim National Guards and others who had come from Bengal. Many thousands of people who came to vote were forcibly prevented from doing so. There were some incidents of killing voters and others. The district is partly under water and people travelled by boats. Voters coming by boats were not allowed to land.

3. A large number of persons voted, who, according to definite evidence, died in the recent epidemics. Altogether the statements shown to me gave a very extraordinary picture of what took place during the voting in the referendum.

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 12, pp 140-141.

2. The votes cast in favour of joining East Bengal were 239,619 and those for remaining in Assam were 184,041.

4 On receipt of this information I sent a telegram<sup>3</sup> to the Governor of Assam requesting him to send me immediately his report and his appraisal of the situation during the referendum and after. I did so especially as a Minister<sup>4</sup> of the Assam Government supported the charges made. I felt that when such very serious charges are made there may be a necessity for a thorough enquiry. This was not only because of the referendum but also because of the state of terrorism that is alleged to prevail in the Sylhet district even now when armed bands move about and threaten vengeance on those who might have voted against joining East Bengal. Most of these people who move about are not residents of Sylhet district but have come from East Bengal.

5. I feel I must draw your attention to these allegations as they are gravely disturbing and if they are at all based on facts then the validity of the referendum is doubtful. May I suggest that some kind of brief enquiry be made and a report from the Governor be awaited before the figures for the Sylhet referendum that you have sent me are published?<sup>5</sup>

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. See *post*, section 5, item 4

4. Baidyanath Mookerjee.

5 See also *post*, section 5, items 5 and 6

## 20. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
19th July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

In the statement of June 3rd as well as in the Indian Independence Act it is clear that the Chittagong hill tracts do not form part of East Bengal and Pakistan. The population of these areas is predominantly Hindu and the chiefs of these areas also desire to be associated with the Union of India. These areas are connected with the Tripura State in the north and the various Excluded and Tribal Areas attached to Assam.

I am writing this letter to you so that it might be made perfectly clear that no question affecting the Chittagong hill tracts arises for the consideration of the Boundary Commission. The chiefs of these areas are at

1 J N Collection.

present here in Delhi and I have assured them that no such question arises, and that these Chittagong hill tracts form part of the Indian Union.<sup>2</sup>

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

- 2 In its award, the Boundary Commission included the Chittagong hill tracts in East Bengal

## 21. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
21st July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Thank you for your letter of the 20th July about Sylhet.<sup>2</sup>

I am sorry this discrepancy has arisen between the statement of June 3rd and clause 3(3) of the Bill, as this leads to argument and suspicions are raised. I suppose the only thing to be done now is to expedite the decision of the Boundary Commission, so that there is only one transfer involving Sylhet, after the Boundary Commission has reported. As a matter of fact, a close analysis of the voting figures in the referendum will be very helpful to the Boundary Commission in determining which parts of Sylhet district should go to East Bengal and which should remain with Assam.

If it is too late to appoint assessors at this stage, I hope that every facility will be given by the Boundary Commissioners to the Assam Government to present their viewpoint.<sup>3</sup> The Assamese people are not at all satisfied with the representation of their viewpoint by Bengalees, whoever they might be. They feel that Assamese interests might suffer for lack of proper representation.

For some time past I have been thinking of the national frontier which might emerge from the decisions of the Boundary Commissions.

1 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 12, pp 285-286

2 In his letter of 20 July Mountbatten stated that he was aware of the apparent contradiction in the clauses referred to but that it was understood that in the event of the Sylhet referendum being in favour of amalgamation with East Bengal, the provisional boundaries of that province would include Sylhet district subject to the final decision of the Boundary Commission. As the announcement of 30 June had specifically provided for such a contingency, he saw no reason for appointing a third Boundary Commission.

3 In the same letter Mountbatten had said that the appointment of two assessors representing Assam to the Boundary Commission for Bengal would delay matters.

I think Sardar Patel and I mentioned this to you on one occasion <sup>4</sup> At present this question of a boundary is thought of far too much in terms of Sikh, Hindu or Muslim interests. I suppose every party will produce arguments for the inclusion of a little bit of territory here or there. The result might well be a very curious frontier line with numerous curves and enclaves. Apart from the question of defence, such a frontier would create many difficulties and a simpler frontier based on some natural barrier would be far better. There is little chance, I hope, of defence coming into the picture in the normal sense of the word, but there is certainly danger of private raiding parties and smugglers crossing the frontier and doing mischief. This will have to be guarded against and the best way to do so is to have some natural barrier like a river or some special kind of terrain. The whole question is thus to be looked upon from the point of view of a national boundary, much more than that of sectional interests.

I have suggested to Sardar Baldev Singh to depute some senior Indian officers to present this point of view to the Boundary Commissions <sup>5</sup> In order to achieve such a frontier, it may be desirable to shift the population of the border areas to some extent. This need not involve any major transfers of population. We must provide for a frontier line which, as far as possible, avoids continuous friction and trouble.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

<sup>4</sup> See *post*, section 6, item 11

<sup>5</sup> See *post*, item 23

## 22. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
21st July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

You will remember that I mentioned to you in the course of a recent interview that Dr P.C. Ghosh, the prospective Prime Minister of West Bengal, had written to me about Calcutta. From information received by him and his colleagues in the Cabinet it appeared that there was grave danger of disturbances in Calcutta when the report of the Boundary Commission comes out. Dr Ghosh has come up to Delhi for a day and I have had a long talk with him.

<sup>1</sup> *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 12, pp 283-285

2. He gave me some account of the difficulties he was facing both on the Muslim and the Hindu sides. There was considerable tension and excitement between them and a general expectation of and preparation for conflict in Calcutta. Meanwhile, while there is a kind of shadow Cabinet for West Bengal, in effect the administrative machinery for the whole of Bengal is continuing as previously under the charge of the old Muslim League Ministers. Some changes and transfers have, however, been made.

3. In about three weeks' time the full separation of Bengal will have to take place. Presumably the Boundary Commission will have given its award by then. We can hardly wait till then to begin the process of separation. It is clear that the city of Calcutta will fall in West Bengal. It is desirable, therefore, that the new arrangements at the Centre should be applied to Bengal also immediately. Some adjustments may be made later on after the Boundary Commission has reported. But in the main the division of administrative functions should take place now. It was decided some time ago that the procedure adopted in Bengal shall be similar to that adopted at the Centre. At the Centre the process of separation of those who have opted for Pakistan has already taken place or is taking place, and the Pakistan Departments are being run separately preparatory to their departure for Karachi. In accordance with this, a like procedure should be adopted in Bengal and those who have opted for Pakistan or West Bengal should henceforward be in charge only of the West Bengal area, and West Bengal, including Calcutta, should be in charge of the Ministers for that area. It is obviously necessary that officers who have chosen Pakistan for their future activities should have nothing further to do with West Bengal area. Their continued retention in West Bengal and Calcutta only leads to friction and to charges and counter-charges being made against one another. So also officers in East Bengal who have opted for West Bengal should hand over charge and be sent to West Bengal. If no immediate appointment can be made of these people, they might even be given two or three weeks' leave. The point is that each set of officers should function entirely separately and should not come into each other's way.

4. In regard to Calcutta very early steps have to be taken to make these transfers and to take all precautions to prevent any serious disturbances. At the present moment Calcutta has, I believe, seven battalions, some British and some Indian. Among these are Punjabi Musalmans and Gurkhas. The Punjabi Musalmans are unfortunately bitterly anti-Hindu and the Gurkhas are anti-Muslim. There have been serious

complaints about the behaviour of the Punjabi Musalmans. In any event there is no reason to retain these Punjabi Musalmans in Calcutta in future. They can be transferred to East Bengal or some other place in Pakistan.

5. The position appears to be that unless full precautions are taken previously, even an attempt to transfer these Punjabi Musalmans might give rise to trouble. Therefore it seems necessary that sufficient Indian troops should be sent to Calcutta first and then the Punjabi Musalmans should be transferred. I understand from Dr. Ghosh, and he tells me that the Governor agrees with him in this matter, that seven battalions in all are necessary in Calcutta. That would probably mean sending three or four additional Indian battalions to Calcutta as the British troops are likely to be withdrawn and the Punjabi Musalmans will be transferred. If this is to be done, it has to be done immediately so that the additional troops might be in Calcutta by the 3rd August. The Punjabi Musalmans could be withdrawn and transferred then. I understand from Dr. Ghosh that the Governor agrees with these proposals. Dr. Ghosh suggests that an Indian brigadier be placed in command of the troops in Calcutta.

6. In the event of the situation deteriorating in Calcutta, there will be immediate repercussions in other parts of Bengal, notably East Bengal. The tragic events that happened in Noakhali late last year followed Calcutta happenings. Calcutta thus becomes the key to the situation and has to be fully protected from the possibility of any disturbance. There should also be no dual authority in Calcutta or elsewhere in Bengal as this leads to continuous difficulties and a lack of decision at a critical moment. Hence the necessity for separating administratively and otherwise East and West Bengal, subject to subsequent decisions of the Boundary Commission. Dr. Ghosh was of the opinion that by the 3rd August many of these processes should be completed so that the new order has begun to function when the Boundary Commission's report comes out. Of course, whatever may be done will not be treated as a precedent by the Boundary Commission whose final award will have to be given effect to.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

23. To Baldev Singh<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

21st July 1947

My dear Baldev Singh,

I mentioned to you some time ago that the question of the national frontier has to be considered from the point of view of the Government of India. Much attention is being paid to various claims and counter-claims of the Sikhs or Hindus or Muslims, and apparently various parties are going to be represented before the Boundary Commissions to put forward their particular claims. None of these is particularly interested in the question of a proper frontier line. It is quite possible that the various claims and counter-claims may result in an odd and complicated frontier with numerous curves and enclaves so as to provide for these differing claims. Obviously such a frontier will be bad from the national point of view.

We must give full consideration to this national point of view not only in terms of defence, but also from the point of view of guarding it against smugglers, and, possibly, for the purpose of customs duties. The simpler and more natural the frontier, the easier it is to guard.

I realise fully that natural barriers like rivers or difficult terrain do not make much difference in terms of defence; that is obvious in modern war. Nevertheless, they do make some slight difference and there is no reason why this should be ignored. Further, quite apart from war, there will be the question of raiding parties, smugglers, etc. and in their case such a barrier would make a large difference. It is easier to protect a river frontier from such raids and undesirable elements than a frontier line which cannot be easily seen or defined. The quality of the terrain would also make a difference.

Yesterday Dr. Ambedkar issued a statement on this subject<sup>2</sup> I entirely agree with what he has said. I think, therefore, that it is urgently necessary for the Government of India to take some steps to ensure, in so far as this is possible, that the best available frontier line is drawn up, subject of course to the main considerations which have to be kept in view. If in drawing up such a frontier line some adjustment of population is necessary on either side of it this may also be done.

<sup>1</sup> R/3/1/157, I O L.R., London

<sup>2</sup> On 20 July 1947, Ambedkar said that the partition of the Punjab and Bengal was an all-India problem for "it involves the fixation of the frontiers of Pakistan and India and must be determined primarily by considerations of facility of defence and administration." The Government of India should have therefore insisted that the Boundary Commission should have military officers as assessors.

The time at our disposal is limited. I suggest to you, however, that we must take immediate steps to do what we can in this limited time. It is desirable for a senior Indian officer to be deputed for this purpose to put forward the Government of India point of view before the Boundary Commissions. Perhaps, it will be necessary to have two such officers, one for the Western Boundary Commission and the other for the Eastern. These officers will study the subject immediately, consult others in the Defence Department and prepare their briefs. Intimation should be sent to the two Boundary Commissions immediately.

It is obviously necessary that the officers so deputed should be Indians and should represent the Government of India viewpoint. They can get into touch with the lawyers engaged and explain to them our viewpoint. Mr. Motilal Setalvad is a very eminent lawyer who is appearing before the Punjab Boundary Commission. Another eminent lawyer, whose name I do not remember,<sup>3</sup> is appearing before the Bengal Commission.

I trust you will take all the necessary steps in this matter

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

3 N C Chatterjee

## 24. To Baldev Singh<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
22 July 1947

My dear Baldev Singh,

Thank you for your letter of yesterday about the Boundary Commission.

The point you mention was raised in substance in the Partition Council on 10 July and for ready reference I enclose a copy of the minutes.<sup>2</sup>

I do not think the Partition Council would be in favour of reconsidering their decision and I am sure it would be embarrassing either for the Government of India as a whole officially to put a point of view to the Boundary Commission or for the two provisional Governments to put opposite views through representatives who are still members of a single Army.

1. J N Collection

2. At that meeting Mountbatten had said that he had informed Baldev Singh and other Sikh leaders that any active resistance by the Sikhs to the decisions of the Boundary Commission would not be tolerated. He was also not in favour of receiving a deputation of Sikh soldiers in this regard.



Sir Cyril Radcliffe,<sup>3</sup> who had made the enquiry mentioned in the minutes of 10th July, has been sent a copy of those minutes by way of an answer.<sup>4</sup>

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Cyril John, later Lord, Radcliffe (1899-1977), a leading British lawyer; Director-General, Ministry of Information, 1941-45; Chairman, Punjab and Bengal Boundary Commissions, 1947.
4. Radcliffe had enquired whether in the decisions of the Boundary Commissions account should be taken of natural features, providing defensible boundaries and markings for general administrative convenience. The Partition Council after discussions agreed that no directive in addition to the terms of reference should be given to the Boundary Commissions and that it should be left to their discretion to interpret the terms of reference.

## 25. To John Matthai<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
23rd July 1947

My dear Matthai,

There are many matters which we should discuss together, that is all of us who are Members of the Cabinet. Suddenly problems have arisen which require joint discussion and yet somehow we cannot find the time. I am now in temporary charge of the Health Department and I do not know how long this charge will continue. I am thoroughly dissatisfied with the present organisation of this Department and I think something must be done quickly. I should like to discuss this and other matters with my colleagues. I hope that we shall devise some method of regular working together fairly soon, and certainly before the 15th August. We must meet daily at some fixed hour.

Meanwhile, how are we to deal with these troublesome questions which affect each Department separately? I suppose we had better have a joint meeting soon. I shall try to fix one in a day or two.

I have had deputations from the Hindu and Sikh workers from the railway workshops in Lahore. I suppose you know all about this matter. These people are in a jittery condition on account of all manner of happenings. They are on the point of migrating to Delhi. What will

happen to them here I do not know except that the Refugee Department will have to work harder than ever, when it has hardly started working. I suppose that the least we can do is to give them full protection and at the same time to make them realise that they are fairly safe. They should certainly be asked to remain where they are. As a matter of fact, it is not certain yet which way Lahore will go.

Then there is the question of the reorganisation of the railway system due to partition. A part of this system in the North-West and the North-East is cut off from India. What will happen to that part of the North-Western Railway which falls to the lot of India? So also in the east, there is the question of communication with Assam. It may be necessary to undertake some construction programme to connect Assam. We cannot do this on any big scale, but something on a small scale might be thought of.

I understand that some kind of a communique has been issued by your Department about the consequences following partition. I have not myself seen it, but it is apparently intended to create a new administration for those parts of N.W.R. which are to be maintained by India. I am not expert enough to know much about this. I should imagine that it would be wise not to set up new administrations before a final decision is taken. I have a horror of adding more and more high officers when the railway administration seems to have quite a large number of these people. Apart from the cost involved this will probably mean the retention of a number of high British officers. Even in the Health Department I feel shocked that there are far too many high officers doing precious little work. It is extraordinary how these people entrench themselves and create vested interests.

Is it not possible to carry on for a while without creating a new top-heavy administration? Could not the East Indian Railway be given charge of the N.W.R. portions which come to India? Presumably, this will only be a relatively small addition to the existing mileage of the East Indian Railway. Even if ultimately this does not prove a satisfactory arrangement, we shall have had experience and we can decide some-time later.

If a new central railway administration is created that will mean probably a head office in Delhi and the problem of finding accommodation for it and for a large number of new officers. You know how difficult it is to get houses in Delhi. Apart from accommodation, even the food situation here will be affected and prices are going up.

I am told that there has been a lot of argument in the past as between the divisional system and the district system and many criticisms have been advanced against the divisional system that it is costly and

top heavy. I hope you would consider all these matters before final arrangements are made.

You mentioned to us one day the difficulty in regard to senior and experienced officers. Perhaps one way to meet this difficulty is to reduce, or not to add to, such posts. In this way we might require fewer foreign officers.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 26. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
25 July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Thank you for your letter of the 22nd July about Sylhet and the question of considering the defence point of view in regard to boundaries.<sup>2</sup>

2 I suppose it is too late to do anything now; but I must say that a very important matter has been treated rather lightly. As I pointed out in my previous letter, it is not a question of defence so much as of raids, customs and the many other problems that a frontier raises. Frontiers have given enough trouble in the past in various countries and the least we can do is to avoid future trouble in so far as we can.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 J.N. Papers, N M M L

2 In his letter of 22 July 1947 Mountbatten mentioned that he had explained to Gopinath Bardoloi that it was too late to consider altering the position of the Boundary Commission, or appointing assessors to assist it.

## 27. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
27 July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Thank you for your letter of the 26th July about Sir Harilal Kania's<sup>2</sup> appointment on the Arbitral Tribunal.

2. There is no reason why his appointment on the Tribunal should interfere with his position and work on the Federal Court. He can continue to function on the Tribunal and succeed Sir Patrick Spens<sup>3</sup> as the Chief Justice. We think that he can combine these two functions without detriment to either.

3. The assurances given in Section 10(2) (b) of the Indian Independence Act would in any event apply to Sir Fazl Ali as Chief Justice though they may not apply to him as a Judge of the Federal Court.<sup>4</sup> There is thus no great difficulty and no particular loss to him. In any event we intended making his appointment permanent later on. We have no objection to this being done earlier if that is necessary.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

- 1 Lord Mountbatten Papers, Broadlands Archives Trust, Broadlands, Romsey, Hampshire, also available in JN Collection
2. Harilal Jekisondass Kania (1890-1951); Judge of the Bombay High Court, 1933-46, acting Chief Justice, 1944 and 1945, Judge, Federal Court, June 1946-August 1947, Chief Justice of India from August 1947 till his death.
- 3 Patrick Spens (1885-1973), Chief Justice of India, 1943-47, Chairman, Arbitral Tribunal, 1947-48
- 4 According to these assurances a judge of the Federal Court or a High Court who had been appointed by His Majesty before the appointed day was entitled to receive the same conditions of service in respect of remuneration, leave, pension and tenure of office and the same rights in regard to disciplinary matters as he was entitled to immediately before the appointed day.

## 28. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
9 August 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Mr. A.N. Khosla, Chairman, Central Waterways, Irrigation and Navigation Commission, has sent me a note about the canal system in the Punjab.<sup>2</sup> As he has been chiefly concerned with this system and knows all about it, I take it that his views have a certain value and importance. I am, therefore, sending this note to you. If you feel that this might be sent on to Sir Cyril Radcliffe, perhaps this might be done.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 12, pp 618-619.

2. Khosla's note of 8 August 1947 argued that both from the strategic and irrigation points of view it would be dangerous for any area east of the Sutlej, particularly Ferozepur district, to go to Pakistan.

## 29. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
13 August, 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Thank you for your letter dated the 10th August<sup>2</sup> about the note which I sent regarding the irrigation system of the Punjab. I appreciate your viewpoint and in any event there is nothing more to be said about it.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 12, p 689.

2. Mountbatten had written that he did not wish to do anything to prejudice the independence of the Boundary Commission, and that, therefore, it would be wrong for him even to forward any memorandum, especially at this time.

## COMMUNAL RIOTS

1. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
22 June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

You have not returned from Kashmir yet and are due back tomorrow. I am, however, writing this to you rather late at night because I am distressed and the sending of this letter will perhaps give some relief to my mind.

2. I am writing about what is happening in Lahore and to some extent in Amritsar. Yesterday I went with Gandhiji to Hardwar and visited the numerous refugee camps there. There were, till yesterday, about 32,000 refugees there from the Frontier Province and the Punjab. Most of them were from the Frontier Province. Daily some 200 or so fresh arrivals came there. Apart from these refugee camps in Hardwar, there are similar large camps at half a dozen other places, some in the U.P. and some in the Indian States like Patiala, Alwar, etc. The condition of many of these people is pitiable although many relief societies and local governments are trying to help them.

3. But this letter is mainly about the city of Lahore where fires are raging and consuming hundreds of houses. It is reported that 100 houses were burnt down last night and this morning. During the previous two days about 250 houses were set fire to and burnt. At this rate the city of Lahore will be just a heap of ashes in a few days' time. The human aspect of this is appalling to contemplate.

4. Amritsar is already a city of ruins, and Lahore is likely to be in a much worse state very soon. Lahore is, of course, a much larger city than Amritsar.

5. If you will forgive a personal touch, I should like to tell you that my mother came from Lahore and part of my childhood was spent there. The fate of Lahore, therefore, affects me perhaps more intimately than it might many other people who are not connected with that city.

6. Human beings have an amazing capacity to endure misfortune. They can bear calamity after calamity; but it is very difficult to have to bear something which can apparently be avoided. I do not know if it can be said that what is happening in Lahore is beyond human control. It is

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 561-563

certainly beyond the control of those who ought to control it. I do not know who is to blame and I do not want to blame anybody for it. But the fact remains that horror succeeds horror and we cannot put a stop to it. Meanwhile vast numbers of human beings, men, women and children, live in the midst of this horror, often in streets and pavements, or run away in search of some peace and shelter elsewhere. It is curious that when tragedy affects an individual we feel the full force of it, but when that individual is multiplied a thousand-fold, our senses are dulled and we become insensitive.

7. Apart from newspaper reports, people have come from Lahore to see me today and they have given descriptions of what is happening there. Whether their accounts are correct or not, I cannot say. They tell me that repeatedly, when houses were set fire to, the residents of those houses rushed out into the streets and lanes and these people were fired at by the police for breach of the curfew order. Most of these fires occurred at the time of the curfew. I am told that the District Magistrate has ordered that people should keep open the doors of their houses and lanes so as to allow refugees from burning houses to enter other houses, because if they remain in the streets during curfew hours, they will be fired at by the police.

8. This is a very strange state of affairs and few persons would like to be residents of Lahore at present. Surely something effective has to be done to stop this tragedy, if existing methods have failed and the police are incapable of controlling the situation. As I told you once, the insistent demand is either for the military to take charge, or for the withdrawal of the police and the military so that the people can look after themselves. You were surprised at this last demand and it is surprising enough. But it is passionately repeated. All manner of charges are made against the police of committing arson and of preventing people from putting out fires and firing at them when they try to do so. It is not possible for me to know the truth of these charges; but the fact remains that there is this strongly-felt feeling about the police and further that the situation continues to deteriorate. Are we to be passive spectators while a great city ceases to exist and hundreds of thousands of its inhabitants are reduced to becoming homeless wanderers, or else to die in their narrow lanes?

9. You gave an assurance even before June 3rd and subsequently that any kind of disorder will be put down with vigour. I am afraid we are not honouring that assurance in some places at least, notably in Lahore



and Amritsar. Gurgaon also is still more or less a battlefield, although similar and adjoining areas on the U.P. side are fully under control.

10. From all accounts that I have received, the statement of June 3rd has had a sobering and calming effect in most places. Whether people like the decisions or not, they accept them and have a general feeling that a settlement has been arrived at. The old tension is gone or is much less. There is no more talk, as there used to be, of civil war and the like.

11. But this does not apply to Lahore, Amritsar and Gurgaon. Gurgaon is a wide area and already several hundred villages have been burnt down. The damage has been done and, I suppose, sooner or later the trouble there will end, though it is still continuing to some extent. Lahore is an even more serious matter, not only because it affects a very large number of persons and valuable property, but also because it is the nerve-centre of the Punjab. There appears to be a deliberate policy being pursued there of smoking out people. It is an astonishingly foolish policy from any point of view and can do no good to anybody. Nevertheless it has succeeded in a large measure, and if it is continued on this scale for another ten days or so, there will be little left in the city of Lahore to save. If anything has got to be done, it must be done immediately.

12. There is one other matter I should like to refer to. This relates to numerous refugees in various places. I think there should be an organised and scientific approach to their problem. So far nothing of this kind has been done and they have been left largely to their own resources or to the charity of various institutions. It may be said that the Central Government is not directly concerned because most of these refugees are in the U.P. or in some State. I think, however, that it is only the Central Government that can view the problem as a whole and help in laying down uniform policies. It is not so much a question of money but of proper direction. The Central Government may have to find some money too. What I would like to suggest, however, is for us to appoint a competent relief officer with a few able assistants to collect full particulars about these refugees and to report how their problems can be tackled. He would naturally consult local authorities who are dealing with the problem now. Some kind of effort should be made to engage the refugees in productive work as far as possible. Their trades and professions should be noted down. This will at least give us the data for the formulation of any policy. Personally I feel that most of them should go back to their own homes. But where the homes have ceased to exist, something will have to be done for them even there. Many may not be able to go back be-

cause of changed political conditions. Perhaps the final decision in this matter will have to await some time. Meanwhile all this data can be collected and relief organised on a proper basis. Discarded military camps might be used for their residence.

13. Please forgive me for this long letter which you will get on your return from Kashmir.<sup>2</sup> I tried to stop myself writing it, but the thought of Lahore burning away obsessed me and I could not restrain myself.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

2 Mountbatten visited Kashmir from 18 to 23 June at the invitation of the Maharaja

## 2. Mountbatten's Note on His Talks with Nehru<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \* \*

2. Today Nehru came to see me and talked in the same strain.<sup>2</sup> He has suggested that what is required is a fresh approach to the problem, which, although somewhat unorthodox and without precedent, might have excellent psychological effect. He suggests—

- (i) That martial law should be declared forthwith in Lahore, Amritsar and any other area you think fit;
- (ii) That the whole operation should be handed over to the military, all police being withdrawn ostensibly for rest and recuperation;
- (iii) That the troops should be empowered to be utterly ruthless and to shoot at sight

\* \* \* \*

1 24 June 1947. Extracts The note was sent to the Governor of the Punjab for his comments *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, p 594

2 In the same strain as Jinnah who had told Mountbatten on 23 June about the trouble in Lahore and Amritsar, "I don't care whether you shoot Moslems or not, it has got to be stopped"

### 3. Conduct of Officials at Lahore<sup>1</sup>

Viceroy has just had a very difficult time in Cabinet over Lahore. He explained why martial law was not likely to be effective, and asked for suggestions. Nehru blew up and said that the situation must be controlled, and that officials concerned from top to bottom should be replaced. Viceroy replied very strongly that this was a totally irresponsible suggestion and that he could not consider anything of the sort.

1. Report of a Cabinet meeting, 25 June 1947. Extracts GEB Abell's telegram to SE Abbott, 25 June 1947, printed in *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 633-634

### 4. Telegram to Akbar Hydari<sup>1</sup>

I have been receiving numerous complaints about referendum in Sylhet. Reports supported by many statements and other data indicate that in many interior areas state of lawlessness prevailed and thousands of Muslim National Guards from outside district prevented voters from voting. Large numbers of persons who had died in recent epidemics supposed to have voted. No sufficient protection given at most polling booths in the interior where intimidation rampant. These and other serious allegations apparently supported by some Ministers of Assam Government.

If any truth in these complaints validity of referendum might be successfully challenged Bardoloi here. Matter being referred to Viceroy. Would be grateful if you could send immediately your appreciation of situation during referendum and after. What steps taken to give security to voters. How far these were successful and what truth there is in complaints of intimidation and forcible prevention of voters from exercising their rights. Whether large numbers of armed Muslim National Guards came from Bengal. Reports indicate that conditions in Sylhet district still very insecure and general intimidation continues. Trust that steps are being taken to meet this situation and afford security.

1 New Delhi, 13 July 1947 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 12, pp 139-140

## 5. Telegram to Akbar Hydari<sup>1</sup>

Thank you for your telegram No. 959/C of 14th July.<sup>2</sup> In view facts stated by you and large percentage of voters and substantial majority in favour joining East Bengal it appears clear that any irregularities and intimidation that may have taken place could not have affected result of referendum.

Trust full precautions will continue to be taken in Sylhet district to prevent intimidation and allay anxiety of minorities.

There is slight discrepancy between June 3rd statement and Parliamentary Bill regarding Sylhet.<sup>3</sup> Question arises whether in case Boundary Commission not reported before August 15th will whole Sylhet district be transferred to East Bengal rectifications and re-transfers taking place subsequently after Boundary Commission's decision This would give rise to grave difficulties and confusion. Therefore essential that boundary decisions should be made before transfer takes place. Am drawing Viceroy's attention to this matter.

1. New Delhi, 15 July 1947 R/3/1/158, I.O.L.R., London

2. In his telegram to Nehru dated 14 July 1947, Akbar Hydari stated that the percentage of valid votes to total electorate in Sylhet was 77.33 which showed that a large proportion of the electorate went to the polls and that there had been no large-scale intimidation. In each of the five sub-divisions the number of votes cast for joining East Bengal was also very high.

3. The statement of 3 June said: "If the referendum results in favour of amalgamation with Eastern Bengal, a Boundary Commission with terms of reference similar to those for the Punjab and Bengal will be set up to demarcate the Muslim majority areas of Sylhet district and contiguous Muslim majority areas of adjoining districts, which will then be transferred to Eastern Bengal." Clause 3(3) of the Indian Independence Bill stated that if the Boundary Commission's award was not made before 15 August, then, until the award was made, the entire district of Sylhet would be excluded from Assam and amalgamated with Eastern Bengal.

6. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
15th July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I have received a telegraphic reply from the Governor of Assam in regard to the Sylhet referendum. He has given full particulars. There was undoubtedly intimidation, false impersonation and incursion of Muslim National Guards from Bengal. But it seems clear both from the number of people who voted and the result of the voting that any irregularities that took place could not materially affect the result of the referendum.

There is one important matter to which our attention has been drawn by Mr. Gopinath Bardoloi, Prime Minister of Assam. From the June 3rd statement it appeared that such parts of Sylhet district as might be determined by the Boundary Commission would be transferred to East Bengal, this, of course, after the referendum had taken place and the major issue decided. The Parliamentary Bill is not quite clear on this point and it might be said that in case the boundary has not been demarcated by the Commission by the 15th August, the whole of Sylhet district will be transferred. Subsequently it might be necessary and indeed it is highly probable that certain parts of Sylhet district will have to go back to Assam after the report of the Boundary Commission. Obviously, this business of transfer and retransfer of territory will produce very great confusion and difficulty and will completely upset the life of the district and surrounding areas. The process of transfer must be a single one after final determination of the area to be transferred. The easiest way to arrange this is to get the report of the Boundary Commission before the 15th August.

This question of course arises in a more or less similar form in regard to the notional division of Bengal and Punjab.

It is not quite clear as to whether the Bengal Boundary Commission will also deal with Sylhet.<sup>2</sup> Presumably, this will be so. The Assam Prime Minister has pointed out that this procedure will not be a happy one, as people from Bengal will not be fully acquainted with, or interested in, Assam. There is, as a matter of fact, a longstanding difference of opinion between the Bengalees and the Assamese, quite apart from any of them being Hindus or Muslims. The Boundary Commission consists of eminent

1 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 12, pp 167-168

2 The Bengal Boundary Commission consisted of Sir Cyril Radcliffe as chairman and justice B K Mukherji, C C Biswas, A M Akram and S A Rahman as members.

Calcutta High Court judges who naturally will be inclined to view the question more from the point of view of Bengal than of Assam.

I do not know what can be done about this matter. Because of the shortness of time available it might be desirable to have a third Boundary Commission for the Sylhet area, one person representing the Congress and the other the Muslim League, with a Chairman. This Commission might work in collaboration with the Bengal Commission.

Or else, it might be possible to attach two assessors, representing Assam, to the present Boundary Commission for Bengal. They would only function in so far as Sylhet area is concerned.

These are just ideas which occurred and I have not consulted anyone about them yet. If you wish, however, you could consult Mr. Gopinath Bardoloi, the Assam Prime Minister, in regard to this matter.

I am attaching a brief note by Sir B.N. Rau pointing out the slight discrepancy between the June 3rd statement and the draft Parliamentary Bill in regard to Sylhet.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 7. To S.A. Brelvi<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
22 July 1947

My dear Brelvi,

I have your telegram about Hindi-Hindustani. I agree with you that this move to oust Hindustani is unfortunate and undesirable. I have been trying to combat it, not with great success I am sorry to say. Unfortunately this partition business has roused passions among the Hindus and they are acting in a narrow short-sighted way in many respects.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 8. To Perin Captain<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
22 July 1947

My dear Perin,

I have your letter of the 21st July. I do not know where you get your news from. Far from supporting the move to push out Hindustani, I have been fighting against this in the party meetings of the Constituent Assembly. I am afraid I have not succeeded in convincing the majority. So far as I am concerned, I am quite clear that the move to oust Hindustani and revert to what is called pure Hindi is undesirable.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J N Papers, N.M.M.L

## 9. To the Maharaja of Bharatpur<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
28 July 1947

My dear Maharaja Sahab,<sup>2</sup>

I have had two deputations of Muslim Meos, who are resident of Bharatpur and neighbourhood, complaining of the sufferings they have undergone during recent disturbances. They wanted me to draw your attention to the unhappy plight in the hope that some relief might be afforded to them. I have no doubt that you are fully aware of the situation. Indeed I have read a statement by you in the press on the subject<sup>3</sup> I hope that everything will be done to put an end to attacks by one community on another which can only leave a trail of bitterness and suffering behind.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 J N Papers, N.M.M.L

2 Brijendra Singh, succeeded his father in 1929 but was invested with ruling powers in October 1939, the administration was taken over from him by the Government of India in 1948, elected to Lok Sabha as an Independent candidate in 1967

3 Newspaper of 24 July 1947 reported that the Government of Bharatpur State denied charges of indifference towards Muslim minority and affirmed that it was taking every possible step to protect the life and property of the Muslims wherever they were in a minority

## 10. To Kiran Sankar Roy<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
1 August 1947

My dear Kiran,

Your letter came some time ago.<sup>2</sup> I realise all the difficulties you point out in regard to minorities in East Bengal. We shall, of course, try to do our best to help them.

I entirely agree with you that the members of the minority communities in Pakistan should not be treated as aliens in India. For the present and until such time as we have Dominion Status no question of being aliens arises for anyone. It is only after Dominion Status ends that nationality will have to be defined rather precisely. You can rest assured that we shall give every facility to minorities in Pakistan. Essentially, however, this will be a provincial matter.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J N Papers, N M M L

2. On 18 July, Kiran Sankar Roy wrote that since the partition of Bengal there was "legitimate fear" that the minority community would be subjected to unfair discrimination in respect of employment in public services and in trade, professions and business. They were also afraid of interference or domination in the spheres of religion and culture. He requested Nehru to make an authoritative declaration that the members of the minority communities in Pakistan would not be treated as aliens in India.

## 11. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
4 August 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I had a visit from some members of the East Punjab Ministry yesterday. They informed me that the situation in Lahore continues to be very tense and the advent of August 15th was looked upon with apprehension by many who expect a possibility of trouble then. All this is, of course, well known to you.

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 12, p 501



2. I was told that when you went to Lahore<sup>2</sup> recently it was suggested to you that military pickets might be kept in the city of Lahore in addition to the police who are already there. Apparently you approved of this suggestion. But it has not yet been given effect to. The East Punjab Ministers were afraid that unless these pickets are sent there soon, there might be a considerable exodus from the city of Lahore. This might be avoided by the presence of the pickets during this critical phase.

3. I imagine there is no difficulty about this as the troops are already in Lahore and only some minor arrangements have to be made. This would certainly reassure the people in Lahore city and scotch the rumours of trouble. I hope it will be possible for this to be arranged soon.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

- 2 Mountbatten visited Lahore on 20 July and, at a meeting with the Punjab Partition Committee, discussed the arrangements for the imminent partition of the Punjab

## 12. To Rajendra Prasad<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
7 August 1947

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I have just received your letter of today's date<sup>2</sup>

2. I have also received a large number of telegrams and post cards about stopping cow slaughter, though they are far fewer than the number received by you. I have met the deputation led by Maharaj Partap Singh<sup>3</sup> and had a long talk with them.

3. Nobody can possibly doubt the widespread Hindu sentiment in favour of cow protection. At the same time there is something slightly spurious about the present agitation. Indeed the number of telegrams and post

1 JN Papers, N M M L.

2 Rajendra Prasad had drawn Nehru's attention to the large number of letters and telegrams he had received favouring legislation banning cow slaughter and the inclusion of a national song in the morning function of 15 August

3 Guru of the Namdhari Sikhs.

cards, though impressive, is itself a sign of artificiality to some extent. Dalmia's money is flowing and Dalmia is not exactly a desirable person.

4. The fact, however, remains that there is very strong Hindu feeling in this matter. There is also the additional fact that for economic reasons certain steps must be taken for stopping the slaughter of milch cows and of trying to improve the breed and condition of cattle.

5. This question should in any event be considered in its larger context of general planning. It is possible to take some preliminary measures even before any larger scheme is passed. But I think that it is quite out of the question for us to talk about stopping cow slaughter generally without the fullest examination of its political and economic effects. I am convinced that if we did so suddenly it would result in great injury to cattle in India. Our better breeds will be swamped out of existence and there would be a general degradation.

6 Every important question runs into another and the two cannot be separated if we have a balanced view. I remember that one sub-committee of the National Planning Committee reported strongly in favour of adding to the pasture lands for cattle. Another sub-committee dealing with a slightly different problem recommended equally strongly the use of the present pasture lands for food production and stated that to continue these pasture lands was injurious to the nation. This shows how one has to weigh every aspect before deciding one course of action. For my part I am convinced that any precipitate action might lead to very unhappy results, even from the point of view of cow protection.

7. I do not think we can ignore the political aspect. India, in spite of its overwhelming Hindu population, is a composite country from the religious and other points of view. It is a vital problem for us to solve as to whether we are to function fundamentally in regard to our general policy as such a composite country, or to function as a Hindu country rather ignoring the viewpoints of other groups. It is inevitable that the majority Hindu sentiment will affect our activities in a hundred ways. Nevertheless it does make a difference whether we try to think of India as a composite country or as a Hindu country. It should be remembered that the stoppage of cow slaughter means stopping non-Hindus from doing something which they might do. For economic reasons steps can always be taken because they are justified on economic grounds. But if any such step is taken purely on grounds of Hindu sentiment, it means that the governance of India is going to be carried on in a particular way, which thus far we have not done

8. You know how strong an advocate of cow protection Bapu is. Nevertheless, so far as I am aware, he is opposed to any compulsory stoppage of cow slaughter. His chief reason, I believe, is that we must not function as a Hindu State but as a composite State in which Hindus, no doubt, predominate.

9. This question, therefore, raises rather vital issues in regard to our approach to almost all our problems. As you know, there is a very strong Hindu revivalist feeling in the country at the present moment. I am greatly distressed by it because it represents the narrowest communalism. It is the exact replica of the narrow Muslim communalism which we have tried to combat for so long. I fear that this narrow sectarian outlook will do grave injury not only to nationalism as such but also to the high ideals for which Indian and Hindu culture has stood through the ages. We are facing a crisis of the spirit in India today and a false step may have far reaching consequences.

10. I have felt often enough during the past few weeks, and have stated as much at our party meetings in the Constituent Assembly and elsewhere, that I find myself in total disagreement with this revivalist feeling, and in view of this difference of opinion I am a poor representative of many of our people today. I felt honestly that it might be better for a truer representative to take my place. That would do away with the unnaturalness and artificiality of the present position.

11. These general considerations are very important and will have to be decided by us or others. On that decision depends our entire future policy, domestic, national and international. India is on the verge of great happenings and is going to step out boldly as a free country. What that step should be is a highly important matter and it will be watched all over the world.

12. But apart from these considerations, I just do not see what we can do in regard to the stoppage of cow slaughter within the next week or so. Any step that we might take may for the moment please many people, it will be resented by some at least. It will also give rise to the feeling that we do not act deliberately and after full thought but are rushed into action by any organised attempt to influence us regardless of the merits of the question.

13. As for singing on the 15th morning in the Constituent Assembly. I have ventured to point out that singing on such occasions is exceedingly unusual and inappropriate even when there is a well recognised official

national anthem. When we have not got such an official anthem, it would be still more inappropriate. We did not use our flag in this way so long as it had not been officially accepted by the Constituent Assembly. For my part I do not want singing in the Constituent Assembly at any time, either in the night of the 14th or in the morning of the 15th. But as the night session is a very unusual occurrence, I agreed that something perhaps might be done there.

14. I entirely agree with you that any unpleasant incident ought to be avoided in the Constituent Assembly or elsewhere. I do not apprehend any such thing because we function in a disciplined way. There was a long debate on this matter at our party meeting and ultimately it was decided that the matter should be left entirely to you as President. It was clearly understood that there will be no singing if you so decide. Should you so wish it, the matter can be considered afresh at the party meeting to be held on the 14th morning or afternoon. Whatever the decision of the party is going to be will have to be honoured.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 13. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
8 August, 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,  
Thank you for your letter of the 6th August about posting of military pickets inside Lahore city.<sup>2</sup>

I have also received your letter of the 6th August about the visit of Admiral Palliser.<sup>3</sup> The Admiral will be welcome when he comes here.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 JN Collection

2 Mountbatten wrote "There would undoubtedly be danger in scattering the military force too much, and they appear to be available, at very short notice, at any point inside Lahore"

3 Mountbatten had asked for Nehru's approval of the visit of Admiral Palliser, Commander-in-chief East Indies (1946-48), to India in December 1947





WITH MAHATMA GANDHI AT HARDWAR, 25 JUNE 1947

**14. Telegram to Liaquat Ali Khan<sup>1</sup>**

9 August 1947

Proceeding Jullundur and Amritsar Sunday 24 August. We and East Punjab Government are taking every step to bring situation under control. Most disturbing news is reaching us from West Punjab where situation has been rapidly deteriorating. Full account of happenings last week at Gujranwala and Wazirabad still not known and position inside Lahore town continues obscure causing deep anxiety. Understand large-scale burning and destruction of life and property has taken place at Chichawatni, Montgomery, Okara and Pattoki. Thousands of refugees reported at stations along Raewind Montgomery Railway line under conditions of greatest danger and without protection, with serious incidents reported from Raewind and elsewhere. Would urge you as matter of highest urgency to arrange immediate protection to refugees by troops in which minorities can have confidence and to assist evacuation by all possible means under suitable protection. Please also take firm and urgent action regarding forcible occupation of shops and houses vacated by panic-stricken refugees. Suggest both India and Pakistan Governments issue statements that preservation of law and property will be recognized. Would suggest fullest exchange of official information regarding Punjab situation between Central and Provincial Governments as lack of authoritative news creates serious problems.

Jawaharlal Nehru

<sup>1</sup> *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol 4, p 247.

**15. Hindustani a Symbol of Synthesis<sup>1</sup>**

Many years ago the National Congress decided to encourage Hindustani as the national language of India. I think that this was a wise decision from every point of view. Perhaps I am partial to Hindustani because

<sup>1</sup> New Delhi, 12 August 1947. Message sent to Perin Captain for the Hindustani Conference to be held in Bombay. JN Papers, N M M L.

it is my home language. But my opinion is based on wider considerations.

Hindustani must essentially be the language generally spoken or simply written by most people using it. That means that it must represent the various sources which have gone to make it and it must not be too Sanskritized or too Persianized which would divorce it from large masses of people

It is true that Hindi and Urdu have developed separate literary forms although essentially they are one and the same language. There is no need to suppress or discourage any of these literary forms, although many of them are highly artificial and beyond the conception of the average person. No great language can grow up if it is based on literary coteries, although such literary groups naturally influence the growth of language.

Language cannot be forced. It has to grow. We can, however, help it to grow in a particular direction. I think that we should attempt to develop a language in our speech and writing which is something between the two extreme literary forms and which, for convenience, has come to be known as Hindustani

India is a composite nation and state. If India is to become great, she will have to retain this composite character and be receptive to ideas and influences from outside, while adhering to its own fundamental genius. Hindustani is a peculiar and significant development of the synthesis which has been so characteristic of Indian life and culture. It can grow from many rich sources and become very soon, I think, a powerful and expressive language. I hope, therefore, that it will be encouraged.



## THE INTEGRATION OF STATES

1. To Begum Abdullah<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
4 June 1947

My dear Begum Sahiba,

Thank you for your letter of the 23rd May which I was happy to receive.

It is now almost a full year since I went to Kashmir and was arrested and detained there for a few days.<sup>2</sup> This year has been a hard and difficult one for all of us but more especially for our friends and colleagues in Kashmir. In spite of heavy preoccupations with vital problems, my mind has frequently turned to Kashmir and its unhappy people. I have thought often of Sheikh Saheb suffering imprisonment and I have felt distressed that, at a time when his wise guidance was more necessary than ever from every point of view, he should be kept in prison.<sup>3</sup> What has distressed me still more is that I have been unable to do anything effective to help him and the people of Kashmir when they were facing and suffering under repression of an extreme type. But at no time did I doubt that the courage and sacrifice of Sheikh Saheb and the people of Kashmir would not yield results.

We are living in changing and stirring times when the fate of India is being decided. Many things have happened and are happening which we do not like, but I have a firm conviction that the will of the people will prevail in Kashmir as in the whole of India, and the ideals that Sheikh Saheb has stood for will find a large measure of fulfilment. With this conviction we have laboured in various fields even though present results have sometimes been disheartening.

Kashmir is dear to me for a number of reasons. Being a Kashmiri, I can never forget it and I am passionately attached to its mountains and wonderful scenery. In recent years my contact with the National Conference has brought me in touch with the masses of Kashmir, and their poverty and misery has sunk deep into my heart. Nothing that can happen can break these strong bonds that tie me to Kashmir and its people, and their welfare will ever remain a first priority with me.

1. J.N. Collection

2. On 19 June 1946 Nehru courted arrest at Domel by defying a ban on his entry into Kashmir State while on his way to Srinagar to arrange for the defence of Sheikh Abdullah. See *Selected Works*, Vol. 15, pp. 391-393.

3. Sheikh Abdullah was, on 10 September 1946, sentenced to three years simple imprisonment on a charge of sedition with respect to certain speeches he had delivered in May that year, calling on the Maharaja's family to "Quit Kashmir."

I have been deeply grieved to learn that the policy of repression by the State authorities is continuing with full vigour and that recently punitive fines are being collected with ruthlessness. The suffering of the people during the last hard winter is still fresh in our minds

I earnestly hope that Sheikh Saheb will be free soon and we shall have the benefit of his counsel in considering the grave problems before us. You will, I trust, convey to him my affection and good wishes.

During the past months I have had information of the great work that you have been doing in giving relief to those who are in distress in Kashmir. I have admired the very fine work that you have done and the great capacity you have shown at a moment of trial and difficulty. I trust that you will continue this noble work. I am sending you a draft for Rs. 5,000/- which you may use for this relief of distress in Kashmir in such manner as you may think fit

With regards and good wishes,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 2. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
4 June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I am informed that His Highness the Nawab of Bhopal has written to you tendering his resignation from the office of the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes on the ground that the Chamber will now become *functus officio*.<sup>2</sup> Further he has stated that Bhopal State would, as soon as paramountcy is withdrawn, be assuming an independent status.

It seems clear that the Chamber of Princes, as constituted, cannot continue to exist for long. But it is also clear that unless complete administrative chaos is to be avoided, some machinery has to continue to deal with States problems as a whole during this transition period and before other arrangements are made

I have written to you on several occasions previously about certain steps being taken by the Political Department in regard to the winding up of Residencies, Agencies, etc., in the States. I have pointed out that while these Residencies represented the Paramount Power in regard to

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp. 129-131

2. 'having served its purpose'; 'of no further official authority'

certain matters, they also represented the Government of India in regard to a very large number of other matters. If these Agencies suddenly disappear, there will be no point of contact left between the Government of India and the numerous States, and administrative chaos will result. If you so wish I can send you a fuller note on this subject. For the present I would point out that there are numerous matters such as railway jurisdiction in the States, customs, etc., distribution of food, cloth, etc., extradition and so on, which will be difficult for anyone to handle if these Agencies disappear and the States suddenly consider themselves independent.<sup>3</sup> Innumerable pockets will be created in India which would encourage smuggling and criminal activities.

It has been proposed that each State should deal directly with the various Departments of the Government of India. This is an extraordinary proposal, for no Department will be able to deal with hundreds of letters from a large number of units. And even if it could deal with them, there would be no common coordinated policy. There has therefore to be not only some centralised Agency of the Government of India to deal with all such matters at headquarters, but also their Agents in the various States. They may cease to be Residents answerable to the Paramount Power, but they will continue to be Agents of the Government of India till such time as other arrangements are made. The whole administrative structure dealing with the vast number of complicated matters cannot be wound up in this way without having something to take its place.

The whole policy of the Political Department has caused us a great deal of uneasiness. It can only be described in Mr. Winston Churchill's language as operation scuttle.<sup>4</sup> It seems to be deliberately intended to break up the administrative unity of India which the Government of India and paramountcy have maintained. It must be remembered that paramountcy matters are very limited in scope and at least 95% of the dealings of the States through the Residents are with the Government of India. If this policy of the Political Department is pursued, it can only mean introducing anarchy into India by the back door. Some machinery must be created to deal with these matters and till this is created, the

- 3 Corfield suggested to the India Office on 30 November 1946 that if Nehru's assent to the principles laid down in the Cabinet Mission's memorandum on the States treaties and paramountcy was not forthcoming, the "only equitable alternative" was for the Crown to begin at once restoration of States rights such as retrocession of jurisdiction over railway lands and administered areas.
4. In a debate on India in the House of Commons on 6 March 1947, Churchill had remarked "Is he (Mountbatten) to make a new effort to restore the situation or is it to be merely an 'operation scuttle' on which he and other distinguished officers have been dispatched?"

present machinery should carry on with necessary alterations. We have today to deal with railways, posts and telegraphs and so many other matters. Are Railways to stop when they cross States' boundaries, or is the postal system not to operate in certain States?

The States are so situated that if they are independent entities they can create very great difficulties in the administration of even the rest of India. It is impossible for us to admit the right of any of these States to independence and to do just what they will. That affects the whole of India's administration, defence and other problems. We are prepared to deal with them in as friendly a manner as possible, but we cannot admit the right of a declaration of independence by a State such as Bhopal apparently intends to do. It must be remembered also that the right of protection which the States possess will also go with paramountcy.

I am writing to you more or less briefly on an intricate problem about which a very great deal can be said. But I want to draw your attention urgently to these developments that are taking place at the instance of the Political Department and without any reference to the Government of India. This is going to lead to a great deal of friction and possibly to worse consequences

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 3. The States and the Constituent Assembly<sup>1</sup>

The Viceroy gave a brief account of his meeting with members of the States Negotiating Committee on Tuesday, 3rd June.<sup>2</sup> He said that he had done nothing to encourage any of the States to stand out alone and to join neither Constituent Assembly. He had given no official advice

1 Minutes of the Viceroy's sixteenth miscellaneous meeting held on 5 June 1947. Extracts *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 11, p. 142

2 At this meeting, in reply to a question by Ramaswami Aiyar, Mountbatten had said "that, in his opinion, the fact that paramountcy was about to lapse made possible negotiations by the States on a basis of complete freedom, even at the present time. His instructions were that paramountcy should lapse on the transfer of power."

on this point, but was prepared to give his personal advice if and when he was asked for it. He said that he had advocated the desirability of arrangements being made for interim agreements on a standstill basis pending the ratification of existing agreements or the preparation of new ones. Both Mr. Jinnah and Pandit Nehru declared themselves in favour of this.

Pandit Nehru complained that the procedure at present being adopted by the Political Department in connection with the lapse of paramountcy was sabotaging all the existing machinery and was likely to produce administrative chaos. He pointed out that by far the greater part of the work done by the Residents was not in connection with paramountcy, but to do with the Government of India. Some machinery was essential to carry on this coordination. There was a degree of such machinery in existence for those States which had joined or would join the Constituent Assembly; but it was essential for the Government of India to have contacts with all the States after the lapse of paramountcy.

The Viceroy said that he would give the points raised by Pandit Nehru his serious consideration.

#### 4. To Baldev Singh<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
9 June, 1947

My dear Baldev Singh,

Thank you for your letter of the 8th June sending me correspondence with the Viceroy regarding military officers for the Frontier.

I should like to draw your particular attention to the efforts being made by various States now to strengthen their position in a military sense. This naturally applies to some of the major States only. In particular it applies to Hyderabad. Hyderabad does not wish to shout about its independence just at present after the manner of Sir C.P. Ramaswami and Travancore. But it wants to proceed more cautiously by getting more and more footholds and opportunities especially to strengthen its army and its arsenals. I hope that you and the Defence Department will keep a vigilant eye over all these States matters. Whatever final political decisions are arrived at will, of course, be given effect to. But there is no reason why these political decisions should be extorted from us against our will.

The main thing is to see to it that no facilities are afforded for increase in the strength of the Army or recruitment of outside elements, or of obtaining modern arms. Also we should not encourage the manufacture of precision instruments.

You will remember speaking to me about the retrocession of cantonment areas. I do not know how far this matter has proceeded, but the more this is held up the better. Indeed the proper time to deal with such matters is in connection with the general settlement with the Government of India about many other matters common to the Government of India and Hyderabad State.

Hyderabad has got vague ambitions of having a port, either Masulipatam or Goa. All this is fantastic nonsense. In any event we have to be careful in all our dealings with the States at the present moment I do not know what the exact position is of Bolarum and Thrimalgiri. As far as possible these should be retained by us in all-India defence interests.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 5. To C.H. Bhabha<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
9 June, 1947

My dear Bhabha,

I understand that certain references are being made to the Works, Mines and Power Department from the Political Department in regard to the buildings and other appertenances of the Political Department in the Indian States. These buildings are being used by Residents and other Agencies of the Political Department in the States. The Political Department is being wound up.

We are taking strong exception to the way the Political Department is liquidating itself without reference to the Government of India which is so intimately concerned with the matter. Our position is that the Political Department should hand over all its functions in relation to the Government of India to the Government of India. In this connection I have been writing to the Viceroy making various proposals for the

<sup>1</sup> J N Collection

Government of India to deal with matters of common concern with the States during this interim period and till fresh arrangements have been made.

Meanwhile we must hold on to all our properties, buildings, equipment, etc. in the Residencies and Agencies in States. We must not agree to sell them or transfer them or otherwise dispose of them to anybody. They are our properties and we may require them, and indeed probably will require them in the future. And it would be unwise to dispose of them now even though the Rulers may want us to do so. Please therefore keep a vigilant eye on these properties and hold on to them and make it clear to the Political Department that you do not propose to dispose of these properties in any way as you think that the Government of India will require them in the immediate future.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 6. To John Matthai<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
9th June, 1947

My dear Matthai,

You know that all manner of intrigues are afoot in some States. More particularly in Hyderabad which talks vaguely in terms of independence. Without definitely declaring in favour of independence, a number of different approaches are being made to get control of communications, etc. Whatever the future decisions may be will depend upon political factors. Meanwhile I suggest to you that nothing should be done or agreed to which relaxes our control over the railways or the police force on the railways in Hyderabad State. This applies particularly to the Sholapur-Raichur and Bezwada-Nagpur sections. I hope you will keep this in mind.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru



## 7. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
9th June, 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

You were good enough to discuss with us possible arrangements as between the Government of India and the States to deal with matters of common concern<sup>2</sup> I have given some more thought to this matter and consulted some colleagues

It seems to us that it is not merely necessary to have some of the Government of India's representatives in the States and some of the States representatives in Delhi What is important is to have some central Agency on behalf of the Government of India to deal with States problems in a uniform way. Not to have this will lead to confusion and chaos in administration As I have pointed out to you there are innumerable common problems as between the States and the Government of India This has nothing to do with paramountcy and its offshoots. If the States correspond directly with each Department of the Government of India, there will be no uniformity of procedure or policy and conflicting decisions may well be arrived at, apart from the great increase in work of each Department It is therefore desirable to have this common Agency or channel

The Political Department has thus far served as such a common Agency. The proper course would have been for this Department to continue for the time being minus its paramountcy functions and for the Department to be put directly under the Government of India It would also have been desirable for the local Agencies of the Political Department in the States to continue for the time being as Agents of the Government of India and not for purposes of paramountcy.

If this is not possible, then it is necessary to create a new Agency immediately. The Department dealing with matters of common concern between the Indian States and the Government of India should be created

1 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 205-207

2 At his seventeenth miscellaneous meeting, Mountbatten said that he intended to send a letter to all the States asking for their concurrence that there should be an over-all standstill order on all existing agreements after the transfer of power until it was possible to frame new agreements or confirm the existing ones, and asking them to inform him whether they would send representatives to the new capitals of the Dominions or would prefer that the Dominions should set up representation in the States There was general agreement on this

and put in charge of a Secretary who should function under some Member of Government. Correspondence dealing with Indian States and the Government of India should be pooled in the Secretariat of this Department, a common policy pursued with the concurrence of the Member in charge, and particular cases could be referred to the various Departments of the Government of India.

The main functions of this Secretariat should be—

- (a) Arrangements in substitution of existing ones for dealing with Agency functions discharged on behalf of the Government of India by the Political Department and its officers
- (b) Negotiations for reviewing—
  - (i) economic and financial agreements, and
  - (ii) steps to be taken to systematise the political relationship between Indian States and the Government of India until their entry into the Federation.

All this relates to the present period, that is from now onwards to the establishment of Dominion Status. The second period will be from Dominion Status to the functioning of the new constitution. It will be necessary to make some additional arrangements then. Probably it might be desirable to have a Minister in the Dominion Cabinet in charge of Indian States affairs assisted by Advisers from Indian States.

This is a brief indication of what I think should be done very soon in order to provide for a smooth changeover from present conditions and in order to give effect to the policy you have enunciated in regard to the States. This does not involve any radical change but only provides machinery for carrying on present arrangements and for consideration of possible changes. We must have, as is generally agreed, standstill agreements with the States till such time as new agreements have been made. Meanwhile even though standstill agreements require some central machinery to function and to start negotiations for review of those agreements, you were good enough to say to the States that you would be glad to put them into contact with the appropriate authorities of the Government of India for the purpose of enabling them to establish new relations with the latter. The machinery I suggest would enable this to be done.

The Political Department, it is said, will be wound up by the 15th August. Meanwhile it will gradually liquidate itself. There will be a period from now onwards when there might be some overlapping between the new Department of the Government of India that I suggest and the Political Department. This need not lead to any confusion or trouble. Indeed the proper course would be for part of the staff of the Political

Department to be transferred to the new Department and for the Political Department to give every assistance to the new Department in supplying information and advice.

As I have said above, all this does not relate to paramountcy functions, but to matters of common concern between the Government of India and the States. The new Department will gradually take over all the correspondence between the Indian States and the Government of India. The States should be requested to deal directly with this Department and not with each separate Department of the Government of India.

Following up the same procedure, local officers of the Political Department in the States should deal more and more with this new Department of the Government of India. Even if the Residents leave, those offices should continue for the time being under some junior officer. This will maintain a continuity of work and can lead easily to the new arrangements that might be arrived at without any hiatus. The States can have no objection to this as this does not involve any decision of policy in regard to their future, but gives facilities to them to deal with the Government of India. I know as a fact that many States would welcome this procedure. I see no way for the Government of India escaping this responsibility and burden. If no arrangements such as suggested above are made now, the result will necessarily be delay and confusion. In any event the Government of India will have to set up some such Department and the sooner it is done the better.<sup>3</sup>

The necessary consequence of what I have suggested above is to suspend various activities that are going on to liquidate the work of the Political Department in the Residencies. I would point out again that these activities concern the Government of India intimately. No steps should be taken without consultation with the Government of India. No property belonging to the Government of India should be disposed of without its prior concurrence. The present staff and equipment, except for some senior officers, should continue till fresh arrangements have been made.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

3 Mountbatten replied on 10 June 1947, "Since the Pakistan Government will be equally concerned in the case of such States as decide to join them, I feel this matter can only be properly discussed at a further meeting of the leaders." A meeting was called on 13 June to consider this.

8. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
9th June, 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I am writing to you separately about a proposal to set up immediately a Department of the Government of India to deal with matters of common concern with the States.<sup>2</sup> This has become a matter of extreme urgency because changes are taking place from day to day which will come in the way of any future arrangements that may be made with the States. I have repeatedly pointed out to you and previously to Lord Wavell, that the Political Department is functioning without any consultation with the Government of India, although the Government of India is intimately concerned with all these matters.

The special prerogative of the Crown Representative, as exercised through the Political Department, relates to paramountcy. The Government of India at present is not concerned with this question, but it is concerned with its numerous relations with the States. And it seems to us extraordinary and highly improper for the Political Department to continue to take various steps to liquidate itself and at the same time to liquidate all our relations with the States without reference to us. This is unconstitutional and many things are being done which might well be challenged in a court of law. We think that by this method the Government of India is being treated not only casually but with discourtesy.

I should like to draw your particular attention to the property in the States belonging to the Government of India. There are numerous buildings with their furniture, equipment, etc. Many of these buildings were built and furnished by the Government of India and belong completely to the Government of India. Some of the buildings were given by the States on a perpetual lease to the Government of India and were furnished by us. Some buildings have been lent by the States. It is also understood that some of this property has been vested in the Crown Representative. What exactly is the legal significance of this vesting in the Crown Representative has to be enquired into. But it seems to me that the right of the Government of India in this property cannot be extinguished in this way.

This property in the States is of various kinds and may have to be dealt with in different ways. No part of it is at the disposal of the Politi-

1 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 208-209

2 See the preceding item

cal Department to do what it chooses. At the most the legal position in regard to part of this property requires further consideration.

I understand that it is proposed by the Political Department to offer certain properties to the States Governments and only in the case of their refusal to take them, to dispose of them otherwise. This question of offer to the States does not arise till the matter has been settled with the Government of India which either owns the buildings and furniture or has a prior right to them. If the Government of India do not choose to keep this property or furniture, only then will the question arise of giving the first refusal to the States. I do not think that the Government of India should part with any property, furniture or equipment either owned by us or leased to us because we are likely to require them for our own purposes in the future. What the Government of India may do with them later is a matter for them to take up with the States. The Political Department cannot settle it over the heads of the Government of India.

I shall therefore request you to issue directions that no property of any kind owned or possessed under lease by the Political Department can be sold, transferred or handed over to any authority other than the Government of India. I am quite sure that if any such action is taken it will give rise to serious complications, for the Government of India will not accept it or agree to it.

It is proposed, I understand, to hand over certain cantonment areas in the States to the States Governments. I would suggest that this matter should also be considered with the Government of India before any action is taken. Isolated action is not desirable. In any event the Government of India's property in these areas, which might be receded, will continue to belong to the Government of India and will not be given up to the States, though I understand that in the past this has sometimes been done. The Political Department has a reputation of acting completely irresponsibly and has acted in such a manner in the past. There is no reason why it should be permitted to do so while it is in process of liquidation. It cannot be vicariously generous at the Government of India's expense.

What I have written above applies to records also and to the staffs of the various Residencies and Agencies. The Political Department is functioning with unseemly hurry to present us with accomplished facts. No amount of protests from us during the past few months seems to have had any effect on it. I would beg of you to stop this process before irreparable harm is done.

In view of the problems raised in regard to property, buildings, furniture, records and staff I think it is desirable that some representative of the Government, preferably of the W.M.P. or of Home Departments,

should visit immediately these Residencies and inspect the buildings, records, etc. and report on them. I shall be grateful if you will kindly let me know if we may proceed to do so immediately.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 9. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
9 June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I enclose a note by Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Iyer on Paramountcy and the States.<sup>2</sup> Sir Alladi is one of our most eminent lawyers and jurists. He has written this note for publication. But on seeing it I thought it might interest you.

2. There is an article on the same subject by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari in today's *Hindustan Times*.<sup>3</sup> In case your attention has not been drawn to it, I am enclosing a cutting.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*; Vol. 11, p. 210.

2. In his note Iyer had concluded: "...there are only two courses open to the Indian States at the present juncture—to enter into constitutional relationship with the Indian Union and become integral parts of the Indian Union or to enter into quasi-constitutional relationship of the nature of paramountcy with the Indian Union. There is no *tertium quid* possible"

3. In his article *Paramountcy Cannot End*, Rajagopalachari had argued: "The public law of India had always some form of paramountcy in operation. The British power in India did not manufacture it out of nothing. Nor can it disappear with British power in respect of States which do not choose to accede." So it should be an obligatory duty on the British to prevent declarations of independence on the part of Indian States by every legitimate means

## 10. To Baldev Singh<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
10th June, 1947

My dear Baldev Singh,

The file dealing with the retrocession of jurisdiction over cantonments in

1 J.N. Collection.

Indian States was sent to me for my information. I have read your notes on this file and I entirely agree with you that this question of retrocession is a part of the larger issue, namely, the future relationship of the States with the Indian Union.

As a matter of fact since you wrote that note, other developments have taken place, and the future position of the States is rather uncertain. This applies more particularly to Hyderabad and Mysore. We cannot possibly hand over possession of these areas till we know what the future of the State will be and what our own relation to it will be. Generally speaking we have to come to a standstill agreement, that is to say that our treaties and arrangements with the States continue for the present and till they are changed. You will remember that the Viceroy mentioned this to us and we agreed. A consequence of this standstill agreement should be and is that there should be no retrocession of any of these cantonment areas till further arrangements are made.

In a note on the file by the Defence Secretary dated 2.5.47 it is stated that the reason for agreeing to this retrocession now is that it would put the States in a good mood for negotiations. I do not understand this argument at all. They will be in a much better mood for negotiations if we do not agree to this retrocession now. If we give in to them on various important matters now, what will we negotiate about?

Another remark in the Defence Secretary's note seems to me very odd. He says that "If we hang on to jurisdiction until June 1948, we shall then automatically lose all our rights and the States will be in a position, if such is their mood, to take over all the buildings without payment of compensation."

This is a strange law. Mr. Dundas seems to imagine that almost everything will depend on the mood of a particular Ruler. As a matter of fact in no event is a scrap of property belonging to us going to be handed over to the Ruler without adequate compensation. It does not make any difference whether paramountcy has ceased to exist or not.

I hope you will make it perfectly clear in all such cases that might arise that no further step is going to be taken in changing our own arrangements and agreements till the larger issue has been cleared up. Meanwhile the standstill agreement will continue. We shall hold on to every area and property in the States that we possess at present.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

# 11. Mountbatten's Record of Interview with Nehru, Patel and Kripalani<sup>1</sup>

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I emphasised that H.M.G. had formally decided to stand by their statement of May 12th, 1946, with regard to the States<sup>2</sup> and that I was tied by the policy set down therein. Pandit Nehru put forward the view that the May 12th statement was an integral part of the Cabinet Mission's plan as a whole; but I pointed out that it had been specifically antedated so that, in the event of rejection of the Cabinet Mission's plan of May 16th, it should stand by itself.

Pandit Nehru declared that he entirely disagreed with the idea of complete independence for the States. They had never had an independent existence before. He advised me to read Mr. Edward Thompson's *History of the Indian States*. With regard to Hyderabad, he said that this State had grown up through treachery and had always been in the wake of the victors to gather the spoils. The States had come into the Government of India system before the Crown had.

I explained that, from conversations with representatives of the States, I had got the impression that the reason why some of them had not yet joined the Constituent Assembly was because they feared that there would be a much tighter Centre under the existing plan than under the Cabinet Mission's plan. Sardar Patel stated that, so far as the States were concerned, the Centre would only be strengthened with their consent. He further said that he thought that I was much mistaken in thinking that the States were moving towards more representative Government. When I disagreed with this, Pandit Nehru flared up and said that he challenged, from the highest constitutional basis, the idea that any Ruler could decide himself whether or not to join the Constituent Assembly. He said, "I will encourage rebellion in all States that go against us."

1. 10 June 1947. Extracts. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 11, pp 232-235

2. The 12 May memorandum had assured the Princes that paramountcy would remain in operation during the "interim period", but it would be necessary for the States to negotiate with British India during this period for the future regulation of matters of common concern, and also to come to an understanding with the "succession Government or Governments" for the continuance of the existing arrangements as such negotiations were likely to "occupy a considerable period of time." The statement of 3 June 1947 shortened the "interim period" to a few weeks



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About the suggestion that each Boundary Commission should consist of three persons obtained through U.N.O. plus three expert assessors, Pandit Nehru at first seemed doubtful. He felt that much delay would be involved, but when I pointed out that we could telegraph off to U.N.O. straightaway and get the chosen representatives flown to India, he said that he would further consider the matter and let me know his views.

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I asked Pandit Nehru to send me in the Congress suggestions for the terms of reference for the two Boundary Commissions and this he agreed to do. He agreed that the basic principle should be a majority population basis.

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Pandit Nehru said that he was opposed to the principle of population transfers. He considered that one of the secondary factors to be taken into account should be religious questions. It was impossible to transfer holy places. The canal regions were another important consideration. The Sikhs had built up this area largely by their own work. He had discussed this question with the Governor of the Punjab<sup>3</sup> and they had agreed that it would be essential to have a Joint Irrigation Board. I said that I agreed with this suggestion. Both sides would stand to gain by it . . .

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Pandit Nehru said that he would let me have his opinion on the suggestion that the Chairman of the Arbitral Tribunal should be a member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

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3 On 30 May 1947 Nehru went round the riot-affected areas, accompanied by P.N. Thapar, Commissioner, Lahore Division, Gopi Chand Bhargava, Bhimsen Sachar and Dewan Chaman Lal. He also had an 80-minute interview with Evan Jenkins, the Governor of the Punjab.

## 12. Misfeasance of the Political Department<sup>1</sup>

Pandit Nehru said that, before considering the various papers which had been circulated, he wished to point out that this was the first time that Members of the Interim Government had had the privilege of being invited to discussions concerning the States.

At Pandit Nehru's request, the Viceroy explained that the Political Department had, until the Government of India Act 1935 came into operation, worked under the Governor-General-in-Council. Under that Act, however, the functions formerly exercised by the Governor-General-in-Council in relation to States were separated and allotted to the Crown Representative. The Viceroy stated that his instructions were that paramountcy should lapse not later than the date on which the transfer of power took place. The lapse of paramountcy would automatically involve the closing down of the Political Department.

Pandit Nehru said that, as he understood it, all other functions of the Political Department except paramountcy had continued, despite the 1935 Act, to be exercised under the Governor-General-in-Council. Sir Conrad Corfield said that all functions connected with the States were exercised by the Crown Representative. Pandit Nehru said that, whereas he accepted the position with regard to the lapse of paramountcy at present, surely all the other matters with which the Crown Representative and the Political Department had to deal were Government of India matters and would continue. Sir Conrad Corfield stated that no such clear division could be made. From the point of view of the Central Government the object of the liaison functions of the Crown Representative was that States should not prejudice all-India interests. The procedure was for the Crown Representative to consult the various Departments of the Government of India and to use the paramountcy power to ensure that States did not take any detrimental action. . . .

Pandit Nehru said that he had consulted many eminent lawyers about this matter, and his point was that at the least it was a highly controversial one. He asked what right the Political Department had to go ahead in taking action that was highly injurious to the Government of India. He had been writing letters on this subject for four months. He and his colleagues had not (until now) been shown the common courtesy of being brought into consultations. Completely unilateral action had been taken

1. Minutes of the Viceroy's eighteenth miscellaneous meeting, 13 June 1947. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 11, pp. 320-326. Extracts Besides Nehru, Mountbatten and his staff, Patel, Kripalani, Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan, Abdur Rab Nishtar and Baldev Singh were also present in the meeting

continuously. Pandit Nehru said that he charged the Political Department and Sir Conrad Corfield with misfeasance. He considered that an immediate enquiry on the highest judicial level into their actions was necessary.

Sir Conrad Corfield said that he wished to point out that in everything he had acted under the instructions of the Crown Representative with the approval of the Secretary of State. The Viceroy said that, from his experience, what Sir Conrad had said was absolutely correct. He went on to say that he had invariably carefully considered the points put forward by Pandit Nehru in his various letters, and taken action on them. For example, Pandit Nehru had complained that the Political Department never consulted the Government of India. As a result of that, he had arranged for Sir Conrad Corfield to go and see Pandit Nehru.

Pandit Nehru said that he alone was not the Government of India. He was talking not only of himself, but of his colleagues too. A stage was now being reached at which very serious consequences were threatened. He pointed out that His Majesty's Government's statement of 3rd June referred back to the memorandum of the Cabinet Mission dated 12th May, 1946. He said that he accepted these documents as they were, but in his opinion the policy of the Political Department had been contrary to them.

The Viceroy said that, on his arrival, Lord Wavell had informed him that the Political Department had been acting strictly in accordance with the memorandum of 12th May. Sir Conrad Corfield confirmed that this had been done. Every item of the programme of the Political Department had been based on this memorandum. There was continual consultation with the Departments of the Government of India. Full details had been afforded to the Government at inter-Departmental conferences. There had continually been full liaison.

Pandit Nehru said that it was one thing to deal with a Department on a specific matter. The wider policy was quite another question. There were many rights and obligations apart from paramountcy. To deal with each Department separately concerning these would produce administrative chaos.

Pandit Nehru said that he fully admitted the principle that any States could, if they so wished, join the Pakistan Constituent Assembly. But there was no trace in the Cabinet Mission's memorandum of any State being allowed to claim independence.

Sir Conrad Corfield read out an extract of this memorandum which stated "The void will have to be filled, either by the States entering into a federal relationship with the successor Government or Governments in British India, or failing this, entering into particular political arrangements with it or them."

Pandit Nehru said that in his opinion this did not signify the possibility of States becoming independent. Sir Conrad Corfield said that in his opinion the term "particular political arrangements" implied relations with autonomous units.

Mr. Jinnah said that in his view the States were fully entitled to say that they would join neither Constituent Assembly. Every Indian State was a sovereign State. Pandit Nehru said that he differed altogether. He spoke as a lawyer. Mr. Jinnah said that he spoke as a lawyer also. Pandit Nehru suggested that the opinion of the Federal Court on this point should be obtained.

Mr. Jinnah reiterated that in his opinion Indian States were sovereign States for every purpose except in so far as they had entered into treaties with the Crown....

Pandit Nehru asked what were the tests of sovereignty? One was the capacity for international relations. The States had no such capacity. Another was the capacity for declaring war. The States had no such capacity. There were 562 States. Of this number there might perhaps be a few which could claim semi-sovereignty, but no more. The significance of every treaty would have to be examined. It was impossible, in his opinion, to plan any general order. The Political Department had been run by money provided by the Government of India. Tributes obtained from States had not been sufficient to pay for this.

Pandit Nehru then read out several extracts from the Cabinet Mission's memorandum. He said that, in his opinion, the whole background of this statement was that the States should enter the structure of one or other Government.

Mr. Jinnah reiterated his view that the Cabinet Mission had never laid down that every State was bound to come into one or other Constituent Assembly. They were free to decide themselves, but there were many matters which would require adjustments . . .

Pandit Nehru said that he entirely agreed with this. He said that he was not intending to lay down that every State must join one or other Constituent Assembly; but if they did not come in, they would have to come to some other arrangement. Such other arrangements could not and should not be preceded by declarations of independence. The Viceroy said that he did not consider that the proposals put forward in the papers before the meeting violated Pandit Nehru's point. In fact, they were intended to secure his object.

It was with this in mind that he had arranged for a paper on the machinery for dealing with questions of common concern between the States and the successor Governments in British India to be written. This

paper proposed two alternatives—that the States should be given the option of:—

- (a) Dealing with local representatives of the successor Governments, or
- (b) Appointing their own representatives to the headquarters of the successor Governments.

Pandit Nehru said that he considered that these suggestions proceeded from a wrong basis. Neither was a good idea. Present arrangements should continue

To have representatives of the States at capitals would lead to very considerable delays. He did not understand how H.M.G. could give a ruling in which the Government of India had not even been consulted. This ruling did not flow from the statement of 12th May.

The Agents of the Government of India should continue in operation until they were withdrawn. The lapse of paramountcy should not lead to independence. Only certain functions would cease to be exercised. Others would remain. It was essential to have a Department to continue to deal with the States. He suggested that the Political Department and the Residents should continue to function. The political and administrative aspects should continue in operation. The choice of what machinery should be set up lay with the Government of India.<sup>2</sup> If any State took up a line of opposition to the policy of the Central Government, this would be considered as an unfriendly act, and all the privileges which those States enjoyed would cease.

A second letter to Residents, covering a draft formula for standstill arrangements when paramountcy lapsed, was then handed round.<sup>3</sup> It was agreed that the schedule attached to the draft formula should be amended to cover matters of common concern not specifically mentioned.<sup>4</sup> Pandit Nehru said that he had not yet had time to analyse this draft formula. He had discussed it in the early hours of that morning with

2 It was agreed that it would be advantageous if a new Department, possibly called the "States Department", was set up and divided into two sections, ready for the partition of the country.

3 The object of the formula was that the "existing administrative arrangements of mutual benefit to the people of the States and to the people of the rest of India should continue in force" while negotiations for new or modified arrangements were in progress. For the text of the formula see *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. 11, pp 385-386

4. Among the 15 subjects specially mentioned in the schedule as matters of common concern were air communications, currency and coinage, posts, telegraphs and telephones, railways, taxation and wireless. As a result of the amendment item No 16 was added to the schedule which read "Any other subject involving matters of common concern."

lawyers, who had raised many points of difficulty. He doubted whether the description that it covered only "administrative" arrangements was correct. Mr. Jinnah gave his view that this was correct.<sup>5</sup>

The next paper considered concerned the disposal of the Crown Representative's records. . . . Pandit Nehru said that he thought that, without doubt, the majority of the records were of concern to the Government of India. He considered that there should be a committee of historians and others to look into the whole question. He could see no reason for rushing the destruction.<sup>6</sup>

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Pandit Nehru said that he was speaking as a representative of the people of the States. Mr. Jinnah said that he challenged Pandit Nehru's right to do so. Pandit Nehru reiterated that he spoke for the people. He dealt with the Rulers but would not forget the people.

5. It was agreed that "the Indian leaders should give further consideration to this Draft Standstill Formula" and that there should be a meeting between the Indian leaders and representatives of the States to consider it.
6. It was agreed, among other things, that the Political Adviser should apply to the Member for Education for the services of experts to assist in the weeding and sorting of the Crown Representative's records and that there should be no more destruction of these records

### 13. Indian States and British Paramountcy<sup>1</sup>

Friends and Comrades,

We will not recognize independence of any State in India. Further, any recognition of such independence by any foreign Power will be considered as an unfriendly act.

There is a great deal of talk about independence and paramountcy. Independence does not depend on a mere declaration by anybody but on various factors—foreign relations, defence, etc. It fundamentally depends on the acknowledgement by other parties of that independence.

1. Speech at the A.I.C.C. meeting, New Delhi, 15 June 1947. *The Hindustan Times*, 16 June 1947. Nehru was speaking on the Congress resolution repudiating the right of any State to declare itself independent and to live in isolation from the rest of India. The resolution was passed unanimously.

The paramountcy of the British Crown arose in India under certain circumstances. I need not go into the history of it but it depends on geography, on history and all manner of factors like defence, security etc. If that paramountcy of the British Crown is withdrawn, as they say it is going to be withdrawn, what follows? So far as we are concerned, we do not agree with the doctrine of paramountcy as it has been declared, especially during the last few years by the British Government.

You will remember that this business of a Crown Representative came into existence only a dozen years ago. Paramountcy has been exercised ever since the British became a leading power in India, first by the East India Company and then later by the Government of India that succeeded it. No doubt the Crown was behind it. There was no division in the Government of India as between that part which dealt with the Indian States and that part which dealt with the rest of India. The whole of the Government of India dealt with the Indian States. This distinction came in only a dozen years ago with the Act of 1935.

When there was some talk of a federation in India, the Butler Committee and others began to talk of paramountcy vesting in the Crown so that it is a new thing. We did not agree with that but I am not going into that question now.

In so far as paramountcy may vest in the British Crown, if the British Crown ceases to exercise it, it lapses, or, if you like, it returns to the States. But there is a certain inherent paramountcy in the Government of India which cannot lapse—an inherent paramountcy in the dominant State in India, which must remain because of the very reasons of geography, history, defence, etc., which gave rise to it when the British became the dominant power in India. If anybody thinks that it lapses, then those very persons will give rise to it again.

Paramountcy must exist, for the only alternative to it is that the various States in India should, in groups or otherwise, join the Indian Union. Then, of course, there is no question of paramountcy because presumably they may join as autonomous and equal units in that Union and share equally in the Union Legislature and the Union Executive. Presuming of course that those units are proper units, economic units, big units fit to be units of the Federation, they may have the same position in the Federation as any other unit like a province. Probably, in the independent Indian Union, there will be no distinction between a province as such and an Indian State as such but all will be States of the Union or whatever name may be given to them so that over all those who are equal members of the Union, no question of paramountcy arises.

For those who do not join the Union the question of paramountcy inevitably arises, because they cannot live in a void.

In the British Government's declaration of May 16, it was clearly laid down that the Indian Union would consist of the provinces and the States. It was not envisaged that any State could be outside the Union, though it is true that a State was given a certain power, or a certain freedom, to decide how to come in. But it was not envisaged that it could keep out ultimately. In the memorandum of May 12 it was stated clearly that the States should either join the Indian Union—that was the primary thing—or if they did not do so, they must come to some other arrangement with the Union. There is no third way out of the situation, third way meaning independence or special relations with a foreign power.

If a State did not join the Union, its relationship with the Union—and there would have to be some relationship—would be not one of equality but slightly lower. The relationship between the two would be that of a certain suzerain power exercising a certain measure of paramountcy and a certain other State having autonomy but within the limitations of paramountcy and suzerainty.

We desire no suzerainty or paramountcy. We want freedom for all the people of India but it may be that for a particular period, the interim period before other arrangements can be made and before some of the States can come into the Union, we may carry on negotiations with them on a more or less standstill basis, all the existing arrangements continuing, because if the arrangements do not continue then there is chaos. Of course they will not continue if the States themselves may take up any aggressive attitude, and go beyond those arrangements.

In no circumstances can we admit the right of a State to any foreign contacts with any foreign State or, in regard to defence, the right of any independent authority to do what it would. All this is not because we wish to interfere with the States—of course we wish the people of the States well—but for another and fundamental reason, that these matters affect the security of India. We cannot permit anything to happen in India in any State which affects fundamentally the security of India, either in relation to defence arrangements or in relation to contacts with foreign Powers.

Therefore I want this not only to be realized by the States but I want other countries and Powers to realize and appreciate the situation. I do not and cannot speak with the authority of the Government at the present moment on this subject. Though I happen to be a member of the Government, I cannot represent that Government on this subject at present. I am quite sure that I do represent the views of the A.I.C.C. in this matter and if I have anything to do with the Government that is likely to come into existence two months hence and which will, I have no doubt, have the power and authority to make this declaration, I should like to say



and other countries to know that we will not recognize any independence of any State in India. Further, that any recognition of any such independence by any foreign Power, whichever it may be and wherever it may be, will be considered an unfriendly act.

The considerations of security and other factors which the Indian Union must have in every State in India cannot be overridden by any unilateral declaration of a State and, therefore, any foreign Power which takes an action on the basis of that unilateral declaration will be ignoring our special interests and doing an unfriendly act to us. I am quite sure that any Government of India that comes into existence two months later will feel that way and will act that way.

The Congress made every effort in the last few months to come to a friendly settlement with the Princes and establish cordial relations with them. A number of States have joined the Constituent Assembly and I invite others also to do so. The Congress has relations with the Rulers of the States and does not want to harm any of them but it cannot give up its fundamental principle that it is for the people of the States to decide the fate of their States.

The principle of sovereignty of the people has been recognized by the U.N.O. Our own delegation to the U.N.O. stood by the principle of sovereignty of the people when the question of Italian colonies came up.<sup>2</sup> Obviously, we could not enunciate one principle for the people of Tripoli and accept another for the people of India or the States.

2 See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 1, pp 492, 498 and 593-596

#### 14. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
16 June, 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

At the meeting which you had with the political leaders last Friday,<sup>2</sup> it was agreed that it would be advantageous if the Government of India were to set up a new Department, possibly called the States Department, to deal with matters of common concern with the States. I attach, for your consideration, certain proposals regarding the constitution and functions of this Department

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 461-462

2 See *ante*, item 12

## ENCLOSURE

1. The Political Department which, under the control of H.E. the Crown Representative, now deals with the Indian States is in process of being wound up and will cease to exist from the date on which India and Pakistan become Dominions. But a whole complex of administrative and economic arrangements, at present in existence between what is now British India and the Indian States, must continue if certain essential services of common interest to the two Indian Dominions and the States are not to come to an abrupt and probably disastrous end. Indeed, even in the political field, specifically as regards external relations and defence, the States must, until other arrangements are negotiated, continue, in relation to the successor Governments in British India, to enjoy the rights and to discharge the obligations which, in exercise of its paramountcy, the British Crown had conferred or imposed upon them. This content of paramountcy directly concerned the security of British India and must logically be preserved in the interests of those who will inherit, from the British Power, the responsibility to protect what is now known as British India against external aggression and internal commotion.

2. To deal with the matters referred to in the preceding paragraph, the immediate creation of some Central machinery which would take the place of the Political Department a few weeks hence is essential. Steps to this end cannot be delayed because the process of succession must take a little time. The new machinery, which must be a new Department of the present Government of India until the two Dominion Governments come into being, will gradually take over from the Political Department the appropriate records and some of its personnel. It will also, during the period of its coexistence with the Political Department, endeavour to learn as much of the Political Department's procedure and mode of operation as may be useful for its own operation after the Political Department ceases to function.

3. The functions proposed for the new Department are:

- (1) To correspond, on behalf of the Government of India, with Indian States on all matters of common concern. Matters of special interest to individual Departments of the Government of India will be disposed of in consultation with them by the new Department. The alternative of allowing each Department of the Government of India to deal with the States will result in lack of coordination with all its attendant disadvantages.

- (2) To supervise the Agents whom the Government of India may decide to maintain in certain States and to deal with any representatives whom the States may appoint to the headquarters of the Government of India.
- (3) To follow up the negotiations initiated by the Political Department between the Government of India and the States for the adjustment of matters of common interest and, where necessary, to initiate new negotiations for a similar purpose.
- (4) Generally to safeguard the interests of the Government of India in the States.

4. During the pre-Dominion stage the Department should consist of one Secretary and one or possibly two Deputy Secretaries. The junior and subordinate staff should, so far as possible, be drawn from the Political Department. Since both the future Dominions will be interested in the activities of the new Department its officers should be selected with due regard to this fact.

5. The structure and composition of these Departments under the Dominion Governments of India and Pakistan should be left to be determined by the two Governments.

## 15. A Note on Kashmir<sup>1</sup>

The State consists of roughly three parts: Kashmir proper; Jammu; Ladakh, Baltistan, Skardu and Kargil. The last named are very sparsely populated and have a considerable number of Buddhists. Jammu is largely a continuation of the Punjab.

2. Kashmir proper is a very definite cultural and linguistic unit with a very long history behind it. In the past it has been a very great centre of Buddhist and Sanskrit learning. The people of Kashmir, Hindu or Muslim, have probably more in common than Hindus and Muslims

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 442-448. This note was sent to Mountbatten with a forwarding note on 17 June, "You asked me to send you a note on Kashmir and I promised to do so. I now enclose this note. I hope you will have a pleasant holiday in Kashmir and come back refreshed."

elsewhere in India. Their language is Kashmiri; their dress, food and social customs are more or less alike. There is extreme poverty all over Kashmir except for some landlords and State officials and merchants.

3. In Kashmir proper Muslims form 92% of the population. In the whole State Muslims are 77% and Hindus 21%, the others being chiefly Sikhs and Buddhists. The following are the population figures:

*Jammu*

Muslims	1,208,675	61%
Hindus	772,760	39%

*Kashmir*

Muslims	1,589,488	92%
Hindus	139,217	7.8%

Total Muslims in the State	3,101,247	77.11%
Total Hindus in the State	809,165	21%
Total Sikhs in the State	65,903	
Total Buddhists in the State	40,696	
Others	4,605	

Total population	<u>4,021,616</u>
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4. About fifteen years ago a popular movement arose in Kashmir State under the leadership of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, himself a Kashmiri educated at Aligarh University. This movement was very largely Muslim as the population itself was largely Muslim. It took shape in the Muslim Conference. It was not, however, definitely communal. Sheikh Abdullah was arrested and imprisoned and later communal riots broke out in Kashmir. This was in the early thirties. This was followed by committees to inquire into political reforms that might be granted to the people. Certain reforms were granted and a legislature was started.<sup>2</sup>

2 In 1933, on the recommendation of the B.J. Glancy Commission, freedom of the press was conceded by the Maharaja and in 1934 a legislative assembly known as the Praja Sabha, elected on a narrow and limited franchise and having only recommendatory powers, was constituted. In 1939 it was made a more representative body. In 1944 two ministers were nominated from a panel of six names suggested by the Sabha. With the appointment of Ram Chandra Kak, a Kashmiri, as Prime Minister in June 1945 the practice of recruiting Prime Ministers from British India ended.

5. Sheikh Abdullah, on coming out of prison, tried to give a definitely nationalist turn to the movement and changed the name of the Muslim Conference to the Kashmir National Conference. He had some trouble with communalists in his ranks and a few left him and the organization. But the movement continued to grow and spread especially to the masses who were principally Muslim. Many Hindu and Sikh young men were also attracted to the National Conference. Even those Hindus who did not join it were usually more or less friendly to it.

6. Of all the people's movements in the various States in India, the Kashmir National Conference was far the most widespread and popular. Sheikh Abdullah was amazingly popular among the masses and numerous songs and legends grew up about him. Certain reactionary Hindu and Muslim groups opposed him and his movement. These Muslim groups later allied themselves to the Muslim League, but they had little influence in the State. The Hindu groups represented a certain vested and middle-class element chiefly interested in the State service of which they had a dominant share.

7. The Maharaja is a Dogra Rajput and his army consists almost entirely of Dogra Rajputs. Kashmiris, whether Hindu or Muslim, are excluded from it. This was a common grievance among all Kashmiris.

8. The real background of the popular movement was economic. The terrible poverty of the people was contrasted not only with the enormous riches of the few but also with the potential resources of Kashmir State. The land system was out of date and oppressive, as well as partial to certain dominant classes. It was with this background that the popular movement grew up under Sheikh Abdullah. It demanded political reforms and responsible government.

9. This movement allied itself to the all-India States people's movement as represented by the All India States People's Conference. This Conference, though an independent body, has been working in line with the National Congress. Sheikh Abdullah became a Vice-President of the all-India body and last year, while he was in prison, he was elected President. He is still the President not only of the Kashmir National Conference but also of the All India States People's Conference.

10. After the introduction of various reforms in Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah and the Kashmir National Conference, though far from satisfied with the extent of the reforms, decided to cooperate with them. They contested the elections for the State Assembly and won a large

number of seats.<sup>3</sup> One of their number became a Minister. Members of their party delivered highly eulogistic speeches praising the Maharaja for what he had done and was doing, but at the same time demanding responsible government. Their objective was responsible government under the aegis of the Maharaja who would function as a kind of constitutional head. That also was the objective of the All India States People's Conference in regard to all the States in India.

11. The policy of the Kashmir National Conference was thus one of cooperation with the State authorities and more specially with the Maharaja who was considered above conflict of parties. This attitude was, no doubt, partly governed by an expectation of favours to come. But there was certainly a fund of goodwill, for the Maharaja and all criticism was directed to various Ministers. There was plenty of room for criticism, for the Kashmir administration for long years past has been amazingly static and unchanging. Nothing gets done there and any intelligent officer soon gets the feeling that he is wasting his talents and his energy because he can get nothing done.

12. This period of semi-cooperation with the Kashmir State authorities even survived the upheaval in India of August 1942. The Kashmir National Conference sympathised with this upheaval and demonstrated accordingly. But the then Prime Minister, Sir N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar, refused to take any precipitate action, and the situation calmed down.

13. There was a rapid change in Prime Minister. Within a few years there were four Prime Ministers. Meanwhile the Minister who represented the Kashmir National Conference complained more and more that he had no responsible work to do and indeed that he could hardly approach the Maharaja himself. Mr. Kak was throughout the Minister in attendance on the Maharaja and ultimately in 1945 he became Prime Minister. The National Conference supported him in this on the ground that he was a Kashmiri. Almost immediately after Mr. Kak became Prime Minister, there was a change in the attitude adopted towards the National Conference. This Conference represented the most powerful organization in the State with a very big mass following. It had drawn into its ranks most of the idealistic youth in the State, Muslim, Hindu and Sikh, and it was especially popular among the peasantry. Evidently Mr. Kak thought that this was too strong to be encouraged or tolerated and he began to encourage communal organisations both of the Muslims and the Hindus.

3 In the first elections to the legislative assembly held in 1934, the Muslim Conference captured 19 out of 21 seats allotted to Muslims

14. Matters came to a crisis early in 1946 and the National Conference Minister resigned. Thus the period of cooperation between the National Conference and the State authorities ended and the situation became progressively more tense.

15. When the Cabinet Mission came in 1946, great expectations were roused all over India including the States. There was considerable irritation at the fact that no representatives of the States people were interviewed by the Cabinet Mission. When it was known that the Cabinet Mission would go to Kashmir for a few days, a telegram was sent on behalf of the Conference to them in which the slogan of "Quit Kashmir" was used and the Amritsar Treaty,<sup>4</sup> according to which Kashmir was sold to the great grandfather of the present Ruler, was bitterly criticised. Subsequently the "Quit Kashmir" cry was explained to mean nothing more than responsible Government under the aegis of the Maharaja.

16. A big agitation began to grow up in Kashmir in support of the message sent to the Cabinet Mission. Within a few days, however, Sheikh Abdullah was invited by Nehru to Delhi to discuss the situation. Sheikh Abdullah thereupon stopped the agitation completely and said that nothing should be done till his return from Delhi. Four days later he started for Delhi and was arrested *en route*. At the same time large numbers of other arrests were made and the military practically took possession of the valley. It was clear, and indeed it was admitted by Mr. Kak, that he had long been making preparations to crush the National Conference. These preparations had nothing to do with the new phase of the agitation and had preceded it. The "Quit Kashmir" cry gave Mr. Kak a pretext for quick and widespread action.

17. This happened about 15 months ago and ever since then there has been a continuing conflict between the State authorities and the National Conference. Sheikh Abdullah and many of his colleagues have been in prison, most of them sentenced, others in detention. There has been repression of an extreme type and the people generally have suffered very greatly, especially during the winter months when food and fuel were deliberately not distributed with fairness. The police and the military have fired at crowds and individuals repeatedly, killing many.

4 By the Treaty of Amritsar, concluded on 16 March 1846, Gulab Singh was made the Maharajah of Jammu and Kashmir State by the British on payment of Rs 75 lakhs as indemnity.

18. These events in Kashmir produced a powerful effect in other States in India and the All India States People's Conference made Kashmir a test case. Probably to some extent some of the other Rulers also treated it in a like way from their point of view. It is widely believed with a great deal of justification that the Political Department gave its backing to this repressive policy of the State and encouraged it.

19. Over a year has elapsed since this began and the result is that Sheikh Abdullah is probably more popular than ever with the masses of Kashmir. The Muslim League there has no particular following. Latterly even the communal Sikh and Hindu organisations have demanded Sheikh Abdullah's release. It is said that the Dogra army also strongly disapproves of Mr. Kak's policy which has resulted in making the Maharaja completely ineffective and almost a prisoner in his palace. Corruption is rampant in the State and the whole administration is centred in a small clique controlled by the Prime Minister. Almost everybody else complains bitterly of this clique and says that nothing can be done in Kashmir till Mr. Kak ceases to be Prime Minister. Even the Maharaja has begun to realise this and wants to do something about it. But Mr. Kak has so frightened him and so isolated him that it is difficult for the Maharaja to take any step of his own volition.

20. Kashmir has become during this past year an all-India question of great importance. It was only because of other developments in India and a desire to avoid adding to the existing troubles that an effort was made to prevent this spreading.

21. Sheikh Abdullah's organization, the Kashmir National Conference, has demonstrated its hold on the masses and there is no doubt that Sheikh Abdullah himself is by far the most outstanding leader in Kashmir. Mr. Kak's efforts to build up a rival leadership have not produced much effect. It is true, however, that Sheikh Abdullah's long absence in prison has produced a certain confusion in people's minds as to what they should do. The National Conference has stood for and still stands for Kashmir joining the Constituent Assembly of India. From the Maharaja's point of view this is obviously desirable and preferable to joining the other Assembly. Mr. Kak, however, comes in the way and it has been reported that he has told the Maharaja that the Viceroy favours Kashmir joining the Pakistan Assembly because of the geographical situation of the State. Mr. Kak has also tried to convince the Maharaja that as soon as he joins the Indian Union, there will be communal riots in the State and that possibly hostile people from the surrounding territory of Pakistan might enter Kashmir and give trouble. The Maharaja is timid and is



in a fix. There is no doubt that if Mr. Kak remains in control, he will himself see to it that there are communal riots.

22. The situation in Kashmir cannot be effectively met without major changes leading to responsible government in the State with the Maharaja as the constitutional head. Indeed there is no other way out and if this course is not adopted, the Maharaja's position will become progressively more insecure. If, however, the Maharaja gives a lead in this direction by joining the Constituent Assembly of India and taking steps for reforms in the State, he would immediately put himself right with the people and gain the support of Sheikh Abdullah and the most powerful party in the State, which, though predominantly Muslim, includes many Hindus and Sikhs.

23. Before this can be done, the immediate steps that appear to be essential are the removal of Mr. Kak from the Prime Ministership, and the discharge of Sheikh Abdullah and his colleagues from prison. It has been said that there are other prisoners also who belong to the Muslim League. There is no reason why all such prisoners should not also be released. If any person misbehaves in future, action can be taken against him.

24. Mr. Kak's policy during the past year has caused tremendous injury to Kashmir and to the Maharaja. Unless this is completely reversed very soon, the Maharaja's difficulties will become insurmountable and the only solution then will be by way of violent upheaval. In this upheaval the sympathy of nationalist India will not be with the Maharaja. Mr. Kak has succeeded in antagonising every decent element in Kashmir and in India as a whole. He has hardly any friend anywhere.

25. It is interesting and important to note that Kashmir has kept out of communal troubles during a period when the rest of India has been full of them. This is a remarkable tribute to the policy of the National Conference and Sheikh Abdullah. During this period there is little doubt that Mr. Kak encouraged communal friction in order to weaken the political movement. Yet he did not succeed although the leaders of the popular movement were in prison. When Sheikh Abdullah comes out of prison, he will undoubtedly be able to control his people effectively and he will gladly cooperate with any real steps for the progress of Kashmir.

26. Sheikh Abdullah's wife, Begum Abdullah, has played a notable part during this past year in heartening the people of Kashmir and in giving relief to the vast numbers of sufferers there. Previously living mostly in *purdah*, she has come out and gone to her people.

27. What happens to Kashmir is, of course, of the first importance to India as a whole not only because of the past year's occurrences there, which have drawn attention to it, but also because of the great strategic importance of that frontier State. There is every element present there for rapid and peaceful progress in cooperation with India. Communalism has not vitiated the atmosphere as in other parts of India. The resources of the State are very great; but unhappily a wrong policy, carried through ruthlessly by a man without any scruple or long vision and with a great deal of personal ambition, has brought the State to the verge of ruin. There is almost complete unanimity today in Kashmir amongst all classes and sections of the people that Mr. Kak should go. Where he can go to, it is difficult to say because he has made himself unacceptable everywhere in India and more especially in Kashmir. But in any event he must be removed from his position of authority. The second immediate step that has to be taken is the release of Sheikh Abdullah as well as of other political prisoners. Obviously no conditions can be attached to this release. When Sheikh Abdullah is released, he will, no doubt, take counsel with his colleagues in Kashmir and outside before any fresh step is taken. The National Congress is deeply interested in this matter and but for the urgency of other work, Nehru would have been in Kashmir long ago. He still thinks of going there soon. Gandhiji also intends going there before long.

28. If any attempt is made to push Kashmir into the Pakistan Constituent Assembly, there is likely to be much trouble because the National Conference is not in favour of it and the Maharaja's position would also become very difficult. The normal and obvious course appears to be for Kashmir to join the Constituent Assembly of India. This will satisfy both the popular demand and the Maharaja's wishes. It is absurd to think that Pakistan would create trouble if this happens.

## 16. To Lord Ismay<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
19th June 1947

Dear Lord Ismay,

Thank you for your letter of the 16th June sending me a note by the Dominion Office on the structure of the British Commonwealth.

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp. 509-511.

2. Thank you also for sending me a note on the decisions taken at the so-called Leaders' Conference with the Viceroy when the States question was discussed.<sup>2</sup>

3. I am having the summary sent to the Cabinet Office about the formation of the States Department of the Government of India, as decided upon at that Conference. I hope this will take shape soon.

4. We have been examining the draft "standstill" agreement between the Government of India and the States.<sup>3</sup> I have consulted in this matter the lawyers of the Government of India as well as some of our constitutional officers and we are preparing another, and probably briefer, draft<sup>4</sup> which I hope to send soon. This draft of ours will also, I hope, be circulated among the Rulers. The previous draft contained many lacunae.

5. The position in regard to the States has become a very confused one, largely owing to various statements made on behalf of H.M.G. during last year without any reference whatever to us. The Leaders' Conference the other day was the first occasion when we discussed the States question as between the Government of India and the Political Department. It seems to me essential that there should be clarity about this matter and that our views should be fully known, so that there might be no reason for misapprehension in the future. This is particularly important from the point of view of the parliamentary legislation that is being undertaken. I do not know if there is going to be any reference to the States in this parliamentary legislation. If there is such a reference I hope it is of the right kind and does not introduce unnecessary complications.

6. Also, that in the event of any answers being given in Parliament regarding the States in India, our point of view will be kept in mind.

7. You will appreciate that it is of the highest importance to us that the States should fit in properly into the picture of India. It is bad enough that India has to be partitioned. It would be disastrous if this process went further and resulted in the "balkanisation" of the country.

2. See *ante*, item 12

3 The preliminary draft of a standstill agreement between individual States and the two successor governments on the lapse of paramountcy was presented by the Secretary to the Crown Representative to Residents on 14 June 1947. For the text see *The Transfer of Power*, Vol 11, pp 384-386

4 See *post*, item 24.

That would certainly lead to conflict till some suitable equilibrium was arrived at. We might well have to go back a hundred years when the East India Company was consolidating its power in India and emerging as the dominant authority.

8. I do not wish to challenge statements made on behalf of H.M.G. regarding the States, though I do wish to make it clear that some of these statements were unfortunate and not in line with the facts of the situation. Even accepting these statements, certain facts emerge. One is that it has been the firm intention of H.M.G. that the States should join the Union of India or one of the two Dominions. In case they do not become federal units of these Dominions, nevertheless, they are associated with them in a number of ways. It is quite inconceivable that a State can become independent in the legal sense of the term, which means having external relations and the power to declare war or peace and controlling its defence and communications. That would be a challenge to the security of India which the Indian Union could never agree to. If any foreign Power encouraged such independence of a State this can only be considered as an unfriendly act by the Indian Union.

9. All this has little to do with paramountcy in the limited sense of the word. That paramountcy is not being transferred by the British Government to an Indian Government, but the facts of geography cannot be ignored and the dominant power in India will necessarily exercise certain control over any State which does not choose to come into the Union. If a State comes into the Union, then it becomes an equal sharer in that dominant power's position. If not, it has to function within certain limitations.

10. I am enclosing a note<sup>5</sup> on this subject which might help in clarifying the position. I would add that any trade pact between a State and a foreign Government would definitely affect our external relations. Foreign trade is essentially a part of foreign relations. Therefore, foreign trade must be conducted through, or with the concurrence of, the principal authority in India. I mention this specially, as it might be thought that trade is something apart from other relations. It is, in fact, intimately connected with the foreign relations of the country and it might well result in creating vested interests which affect the security and vital interests of that country.

11. I trust that the States Department of the Government of India will

<sup>5</sup> See the following item

soon be constituted, so that it can deal with all these matters satisfactorily and uniformly. There has been enough delay already and further delay might lead to greater confusion.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 17. Paramountcy and the States<sup>1</sup>

In the memorandum on States' Treaties and Paramountcy presented by the Cabinet Mission to His Highness the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes on the 12th May, 1946, it was stated:

- (a) "During the interim period which must elapse before the coming into operation of a new constitutional structure under which British India will be independent or fully self-governing, Paramountcy will remain in operation. But the British Government could not and will not in any circumstances transfer Paramountcy to an Indian Government." (Para. 2)
- (b) "During the interim period it will be necessary for the States to conduct negotiations with British India in regard to the future regulation of matters of common concern, especially in the economic and financial fields. Such negotiations, which will be necessary whether the States desire to participate in the new constitutional structure or not, will occupy a considerable period of time, and since some of these negotiations may well be incomplete when the new structure comes into being, it will, in order to avoid administrative difficulties, be necessary to arrive at an understanding between the States and those likely to control the succession government or governments that for a period of time the then existing arrangements as to these matters of common concern should continue until the new agreements are completed." (Para. 4)
- (c) "When a new fully self-governing or independent government or governments come into being in British India, His Majesty's

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 511-513 This note was enclosed by Nehru to his letter to Lord Ismay dated 19 June 1947. The words in italics are underlined in the original.

Government's influence with these governments will not be such as to enable them to carry out the obligations of Paramountcy. Moreover, they cannot contemplate that British troops would be retained in India for this purpose. Thus, as a logical sequence and in view of the desires expressed to them on behalf of the Indian States, His Majesty's Government will cease to exercise the powers of Paramountcy. *This means that the rights of the States which flow from their relationship with the Crown will no longer exist and that all the rights surrendered by the States to the Paramount Power will return to the States.* Political arrangements between the States on the one side and the British Crown and British India on the other will thus be brought to an end. *The void will have to be filled either by the States entering into a federal relationship with the successor government or governments in British India, or, failing this, entering into particular political arrangements with it or them.*" (Para. 5).

2. The plan announced by the Viceroy on June 3rd shortens the interim period referred to in extracts (a) and (b) to a few weeks. Continuance, for a period of time, of the arrangements now existing as to the matters of common concern mentioned in extract (b) thus becomes a matter of urgent necessity. These matters, it may be noted, relate mainly to the economic and fiscal fields. A draft standstill agreement for this purpose has been prepared and circulated by the Political Department to the Indian States. But, as regards "*political* arrangements between the States on the one side and the British Crown and British India on the other" which will be brought to an end when His Majesty's Government will cease to exercise the power of paramountcy, no action has been taken by the Political Department, although the extract in para. 1 (c) recognises that this "void will have to be filled either by the States entering into a federal relationship with the successor government or governments in British India, or, failing this, entering into particular political arrangements with it or them."

3. Both with States which have joined the Constituent Assembly and those which have declared their intention not to join it, the Government of India are most anxious to arrive at a "regulation of matters of common concern, especially in the economic and financial fields," and at particular political arrangements to take the place of paramountcy. But this desirable consummation cannot be achieved by the single will or effort of the Government of India. Unless the States show an equal desire for a mutually beneficial and honourable settlement, there may be a

void both in respect of administrative arrangements and of political relations.

The facts of geography, which are as paramount as paramountcy itself, make it necessary, however, that if the security and well-being of India are to be assured, there shall be no 'void', and both kinds of arrangements must be made. Otherwise, in the absence of what might comprehensively be described as administrative arrangements, such matters of common interest as railway, telegraphic and postal communications and other services of common benefit to India as well as the States may come to an end. And, without political arrangements, States may establish relations with foreign countries, even with countries unfriendly to India, raise large armies, and take other measures which may be a menace to the security of the new Dominion of India. The territories of the Dominion will be so interlaced with the territories of the States in geographical contiguity to it as to render a complete isolation of the administrative and economic life of the Dominion from that of the States or the conduct of its foreign relations and defence independently of the foreign relations and defence of the States impossible.

4. India does not desire the continuance of any relationship between herself and the Indian States now exercised by the Paramount Power from motives of prestige. Nor is it India's desire to offend the dignity of Indian States by the use of any such term as "subordinate cooperation" to describe her relationship with the States. But, "to safeguard the interests of the community as a whole"—the phrase is quoted from paragraph 29 of the Report of the Butler Committee—the new Dominion of India must broadly retain the right to continue, in the administrative and economic as well as in the political field, the same relationships as have always prevailed between the States and the Paramount Power. The only matters which, *prima facie*, do not appear to affect "the interests of the community as a whole" are dynastic ones; these may be excepted from the scope of the proposed relationship if the States so desire.

5. In paragraph 39 of the Butler Report, the following passage occurs: "It is not in accordance with historical fact that when the Indian States came into contact with British Power they were independent, each possessed of full sovereignty which no modern international lawyer would hold to be governed by the rules of international law. In fact, none of the States ever held international status". It would be a strange commentary on the facts of modern government if the creation of two States, successors to British Power in India, were to result in the conferment on Indian States of an international status which they never enjoyed before,

to the almost certain detriment of one or both successor States and without any apparent commensurate benefit to the people of the States. Such a sequel to the withdrawal of British Power from India, no successor government, conscious of its responsibilities to its own people, could accept.

## 18. To the Maharaja of Indore<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
21 June 1947

Dear Maharaja,

I have hesitated to write to you because it is not my custom to interfere in this way in States activities. But some things that have happened to Indore recently have surprised me so much that I felt I should let you know how Indore or rather the Indore Government is suffering in people's eyes.

2. Five years ago you issued a statement to the press and you also wrote to me urging me to go immediately to the United States of America.<sup>2</sup> It appeared then that you were anxious to democratise your State and to give a lead to the other Rulers. Now Indore is considered one of the back-numbers among States; and it possesses not only a British Prime Minister but actually, I believe, three British Ministers. The fact that these men are very second-rate is bad enough. But the real question is that when India is on the verge of independence and British officials are leaving India in large numbers, Indore should reverse this current. This is most extraordinary and can only bring discredit to the State. Indeed I have heard very strong criticisms of this from many responsible people.

3. I understand that the Nawab of Bhopal told you recently that if you join the Constituent Assembly, some awful consequences would follow in regard to the curtailment of the State revenues. What he is reported to have said to you and others is so wide of the mark that I am surprised that anyone who knew the facts could have said it. If you

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Yashwant Rao Holkar had written to Nehru, on 12 May 1942 that, as Col Johnson, the personal representative of the President of the U.S.A. had extended an invitation to him to visit America, he would visit that country to put India's case in its proper perspective before the American Government and people. But permission was denied by the Government.



are interested in knowing what the Constituent Assembly has so far done in regard to the States, I would suggest to you to take the trouble to read the reports of the Constituent Assembly on the subject instead of getting your facts from an interested and prejudiced party.

4. I think that all States in India should, for their own good, join the Constituent Assembly. But I really do not care very much whether every State joins or not because in any event the States will be affected by the establishment of a strong Indian Union. This fact cannot be ignored, and thus the choice for a State is limited.

5. That choice, of course, must be in consonance with the people's wishes. I understand that at your request the Indore Prajamandal has postponed its annual session for a month. Presumably you are going to make some announcement during this month. I trust that your decision regarding the Constituent Assembly will be made soon so that we may know definitely whether you are joining it or not and take action accordingly. As regards the internal structure of the State, it is clear, even according to the British Cabinet Mission's memorandum, that representative institutions, meaning thereby responsible government, should be established soon.

I hope you are keeping well now.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

# 19. To P. Subbaroyan<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
21 June 1947

My dear Subbaroyan,

You will remember that I mentioned to you, when you were here, about Travancore. In view of the Travancore Government's attitude<sup>2</sup> there is

1. J.N. Collection.

2 On 12 June 1947 declarations were issued in Hyderabad city and Travandrum stating that both Hyderabad and Travancore would declare their independence on the lapse of paramountcy and would join neither of the Constituent Assemblies. On 21 June, the Travancore Government announced that it had been decided, as soon as paramountcy ended, to accredit a Travancorean representative to Pakistan and A.P. Pillai had been appointed a representative in New Delhi to negotiate "a temporary and standstill arrangement" between Hindustan and Travancore.

no reason whatever why any kind of facility be offered to it by the Madras Government. This would apply especially to cases of extradition. I think we should make it clear whenever occasion arises that we are unable to cooperate with the Travancore Government, more especially in regard to any repression that it may indulge in.

2. It is difficult for me to judge of the situation in Madras and in any event I should not like to interfere with your Government's discretion. But in view of developments, it might be worthwhile for you to consider if you cannot tone down your policy in regard to keeping a considerable number of Communists under detention.<sup>3</sup> I gather that the Communist Party is trying to change its general policy towards the Congress and the Congress Governments.<sup>4</sup> How far this would go, I do not know. But some change is certainly visible. In view of this, a gesture on your part might be a good policy. But it is for you to judge

3. I understand that one or two leading Communists are in prison<sup>5</sup> chiefly because of their doings in Travancore. Their cases might also be reconsidered.

4. Some reports have reached us that the armed police in Malabar has been misbehaving and molesting women. This is worth inquiring into.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. As a result of the rioting inspired by the Communists in several towns of the Madras State 550 workers of the party and trade union leaders were arrested. In January 1947 the Madras government declared the party illegal in that State and detained 160 more Communists.

4. The Communist Party of India abandoned its policy of revolutionary war and in a resolution passed in June 1947 offered support to the "national leadership in the proud task of building the Indian republic on democratic foundations". It also urged all progressive Congressmen to rally behind Nehru.

5. The detenus including N.K. Krishnan and E.M.S. Namboodiripad were kept in Vellore Jail under the Public Safety Act from January 1947.

## 20. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
22 June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Your attention must have been drawn to the various statements made by Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar or on his behalf regarding Travancore<sup>2</sup>. He has declared that Travancore will be independent on the lapse of paramountcy on the 15th August. This raises vital issues and any perseverance on his part in this attitude and declaration will inevitably bring Travancore into conflict with the Government of India.

2. He has nominated a representative of Travancore for Delhi. Normally we would welcome any representative from any State and deal with him directly in order to facilitate business of common concern. But after the declarations made by Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, any recognition of his envoy here becomes undesirable and objectionable.

3. In today's paper it is stated on behalf of the Travancore Government that "as a result of personal discussions and correspondence between Mr. Jinnah and the Dewan of Travancore, the Dominion of Pakistan, on its establishment, has agreed to receive a representative of Travancore and to establish relationship with the State which will be of mutual advantage"; further that in pursuance of this decision the Travancore Government have nominated a certain person "as representative of Travancore State in the Dominion of Pakistan and he will take charge of his duties from the date on which paramountcy lapses and Travancore becomes independent."

the Political Department and if that Department's sanction or concurrence has been obtained. If they have not been so referred, then I think it is not only a breach of decorum but also of the rules at present governing the relationship of the States with the Paramount Power.

5 The Dominion Government of India will, no doubt, deal with this matter. But meanwhile such statements are mischievous and harmful and I think that Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar should be informed accordingly.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 21. To the Maharaja of Bikaner<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
24 June 1947

My dear Maharaja Saheb,

During one of our talks in recent months you told me of the early steps you were going to take to introduce constitutional reforms leading to responsible government within a fixed period.<sup>2</sup> I was happy to learn this from you and I had hoped that Bikaner State would give a lead to other States.

2. I learn now that a large number of political prisoners, amounting to about 60, are still in prison or under detention.<sup>3</sup> Many of these have been in prison for a considerable time. There was, so far as I remember, some kind of a movement there against the enforcement of Section 144 about a year ago. That movement was withdrawn and it was hoped, and I believe an assurance was also given, that the political prisoners would be released.

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. The Maharaja promulgated the Government of Bikaner Act, 1947, which in two years would lead to the establishment of responsible government under the aegis of the Ruler and would bring into existence a legislature of two Houses based on a wide and popular franchise, and the entire range of administration would be entrusted to a council responsible to the legislature with a few reservations.

3. Since the Ruler's reforms declaration in August 1946, bans under Section 144 had been continuously imposed and many people had been put into prison. The bans were removed only in the last week of June 1947.

3. I am not very much interested in past history and perhaps all the facts have not been placed before me. But it does seem to me unfortunate that during this period of vital change and the end of an era in India, political prisoners should be kept in detention. I do earnestly hope that you will order their release and thus help in creating an atmosphere for the big changes that are coming soon.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 22. To K.M. Panikkar<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
24 June 1947

My dear Panikkar,

I received your letter of the 15th June. I appreciate what you have written and I hope that something will be done in regard to the matters referred to by you.

2. I am writing to the Maharaja about the political prisoners still under detention in Bikaner. I am distressed by this fact and it is obvious that this kind of thing brings a certain discredit on all of us. At this particular moment it is peculiarly inappropriate to keep political prisoners and I hope they will all be released.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Papers, N M M L. Panikkar was at this time Prime Minister of Bikaner.

## 23. To Lord Ismay<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
25th June 1947

Dear Lord Ismay,

I enclose three copies of our draft "standstill" agreement<sup>2</sup> applicable to the States. After much consideration we have decided to keep it as short as possible and to adhere to the previous draft.

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, p 629

2. See the following item

I have added some notes on the clauses so as to explain their significance.

May I suggest that this draft should also be circulated to all the people to whom the previous draft was sent, so that they may have full time to consider it?

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 24. Congress Draft of "Standstill" Agreement<sup>1</sup>

The "standstill" agreement should be on the following lines:

### *Preamble*

Whereas it is expedient that certain existing relations and arrangements between the Indian States and the rest of India should, for their common benefit, continue in force while negotiations for new or modified relations and arrangements are in progress between the authorities concerned:

Now, therefore, it is agreed between the parties that:—

1. No State shall be liable to pay any cash contribution falling due after \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup> in so far as it exceeds the value of any privilege or immunity which the State enjoys.
2. Until otherwise provided by mutual agreement, a State shall be entitled to the continuance of any privilege or immunity which it enjoyed immediately before \_\_\_\_\_,<sup>3</sup> provided that it continues duly to fulfil all conditions or reciprocal obligations attached to each such privilege or immunity.

1. Enclosure to Nehru's letter to Ismay dated 25 June 1947 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 11, pp 629-632

2&3 On the margin is written: "Here mention date on which Dominion Constitution comes into operation."

### *Explanation*

The term "cash contribution"<sup>4</sup> and "privilege or immunity"<sup>5</sup> in the above clauses have the meanings assigned to them in section 147 of the Government of India Act, 1935.

3. (1) Until new agreements in this behalf are completed, all relations and arrangements as to matters of common concern now existing between the Crown and any Indian State shall continue as between the appropriate successor Government and the State.
- (2) In particular, the matters referred to above shall include those specified in the Schedule annexed.
4. Until otherwise provided by mutual agreement, the criminal, revenue and civil jurisdiction heretofore exercisable in any Indian State of class III as defined in para. 11 of the Indian States Committee's Report 1928-29,<sup>6</sup> by, or by persons acting under the authority of, the Crown Representative shall hereafter be exercisable by, or by persons acting under the authority of, the appropriate successor Government.

### SCHEDULE

1. Air Communications
  2. Arms and equipment
  3. Control of Commodities
  4. Currency and coinage
  5. Customs
  6. Defence
  7. External Affairs
  8. Extradition
- 4 According to the Government of India Act, 1935, "Cash contributions" meant periodical contributions, in acknowledgement of the suzerainty of His Majesty, contributions fixed on the creation or restoration of a State, or formerly payable to another State but then payable to His Majesty by right of conquest, assignment or lapse.
  - 5 "Privilege" or "immunity" meant rights, privileges or advantages in respect of the levying of sea-customs or the production and sale of untaxed salt, sums available in respect of surrender of the right to levy internal customs, duties, the annual value to the Ruler of any privilege or territory due to surrender of any such right, privileges in respect of free service, stamps or free carriage of state mails on Government business, privilege of entry free and the right to issue currency notes.
  - 6 Paragraph 11 of the Indian States Committee Report of 1928-29 defined "Estates, Jagirs and others" numbering 327, having an area of 6406 square miles and a population of 801,674 and yielding a revenue of 71 lakhs of rupees, as class III States.

9. Import and Export Control
10. Irrigation and Electric Power
11. Motor vehicles
12. National Highways
13. Opium
14. Posts, Telegraphs and Telephones
15. Railways
16. Salt
17. Taxation
18. Wireless.

### *Notes on Clauses*

Clauses 1 and 2 correspond to clauses (1) and (2) of the Political Department's draft,<sup>7</sup> except in one respect. The effect of the latter is to remit all cash contributions payable by the States while preserving to them for two years the privileges or immunities which they are enjoying. This seems rather one-sided even section 147 of the Act of 1935 did not permit the remission of any cash contribution except in so far as it exceeded the value of any privilege or immunity enjoyed by the State. The effect of the clauses as redrafted is to remove the two-year limit, and to set off the privileges or immunities against the cash contributions

Clause 3 corresponds roughly to clause (3) of the Political Department's draft, but with certain important differences. First, it will be noticed that in the Schedule referred to in the clause, we have proposed to insert three new subjects, defence, external affairs and extradition. Defence and external affairs are the most important matters of common concern, as they involve the security of the whole of India. Extradition is also an obvious matter of common concern. Secondly, clause (3) of the Political Department's draft is limited to the scheduled matters, whereas, according to the present draft, the enumeration in the Schedule is merely illustrative and not to be regarded as exhaustive. Every matter of common concern, whether it is mentioned in the Schedule or not, comes within the meaning of the new clause, although for greater certainty some of the more important matters have been enumerated in the Schedule. A third point of difference between the two drafts is that the two-year limit occurring in the Political Department's draft has been omitted in the revised draft, which substitutes the phrase "until new arrangements in this behalf are completed", following in this respect the wording of paragraph 4 of the Cabinet Mission's memorandum of May 12, 1946. Lastly, while the Political Department's draft refers to "existing administra-

7 For the Political Department's draft see *The Transfer of Power*, Vol 11, pp 385-386



tive arrangements", the redraft refers to "all relations and arrangements", which is a more comprehensive phrase. In regard to external affairs in particular, the term "relations" is more appropriate than "arrangements".

It should be noted that relations and arrangements as to defence and external affairs are not only covered by the phrase "regulation of matters of common concern" occurring in para. 4 of the memorandum, but also by the phrase "political arrangements" occurring in para. 5.

Clause 4. This is new, there being no corresponding clause in the Political Department's draft. It applies only to certain petty States, particularly in Kathiawar and Gujarat. According to paragraph 11 of the Butler Committee's Report, there are 327 of these petty States classed by the Committee as estates, *jagirs*, etc. The total area of these States is less than 6,500 square miles and the population at the time of the Committee's Report was less than one million. The Rulers of these States exercise petty judicial powers, such as, trying criminal cases punishable with not more than three months' imprisonment and Rs 200/- fine, and disposing of civil suits up to Rs. 500/- in value. The residuary powers have been exercised in the past by the Crown Representative or by persons acting under his authority. It cannot be the intention that after the termination of paramountcy, say in August 1947, these petty States are to attain a status that they never had during the last 150 years and to acquire almost overnight powers of life and death. Obviously, therefore, some kind of standstill agreement is necessary for the exercise of the residuary jurisdiction. In a large number of cases, the Crown Representative has under various attachment schemes transferred his jurisdiction to the "Attaching State". The effect of clause 4 is that the residuary jurisdiction will in future fall to be exercised by, or by persons acting under the authority of, the successor Government. If the successor Government chooses to adopt the existing attachment schemes in regard to the Attached States, it can do so by passing an appropriate order to that effect, and, in that event, the residuary jurisdiction will fall to be exercised by, or under the authority of, the Ruler of the Attaching State. If, however, the successor Government chooses to depart from the attachment scheme in any particular instance, it is free to do so. Clause 4 as drafted leaves the successor Government free to adopt any course which it deems best.

**25. To Rajendra Prasad<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
25th June 1947

My dear Rajen Babu,

I enclose a copy of our draft "standstill" agreement which I am sending to Lord Ismay.<sup>2</sup> After a further talk with Rajaji, Rau and Bajpai it was decided not to make any alterations in this and to leave it as short and simple as possible, in accordance with our previous decision.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

1. Rajendra Prasad Papers, National Archives of India.

2. See the preceding item

**26. To Rajendra Prasad<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
27 June 1947

My dear Rajendra Babu,

Your letter of today's date. All I know about this matter in regard to Travancore is what I read in the papers. So I can throw no further light. I feel, however, that the Madras Government is perfectly justified in withdrawing any officer from Travancore who was on deputation there. This applies more specially to a police officer.

As regards any ban on pulses, I think that action should only be taken after full consideration of the policy involved in it. Anyway I think it is premature at present

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection

## 27. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
28 June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Thank you for your letter of the 27th June.<sup>2</sup>

My sister is arriving here tomorrow morning<sup>3</sup> I am sure she will be happy to meet you and Lady Mountbatten. Her daughter, Chandralekha, is not coming with her.

Thank you also for your letter of the 26th June about the note I sent on the States including our draft for "Standstill" agreement.<sup>4</sup> I hope that the draft will be circulated to all the parties concerned. It was prepared after consultation with eminent lawyers and the Constitutional Adviser.

I have also received your letter of the 27th June in regard to the proposed legislation.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection

2 In his letter of 27 June, Mountbatten mentioned that at his "recent meetings", Jinnah was extremely displeased at his (Mountbatten's) insistence on reforming the Government on the lines Nehru wanted. In fact, Jinnah had claimed that it was completely illegal for Mountbatten to do so and the latter therefore undertook to forward his protest to London.

3. In the same letter Mountbatten expressed his desire to have an informal talk with Vijayalakshmi Pandit before she went to take up her important duties in Russia and with the U.N.O

4 In his letter of 26 June 1947, Mountbatten expressed the hope that "accommodation between the States and the two Dominions" might be secured at the meeting next month between the Dominions and the States, who must decide between themselves what their future relationship was to be. He would do what he could to promote an agreed settlement.

## 28. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
30 June 1947

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I am writing to you about Bastar State. Several months ago I wrote to Lord Wavell drawing his attention to various rumours about Hyderabad gaining valuable mining concessions in Bastar State.<sup>2</sup> I pointed out that

1. J.N. Collection.

2 See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol 1, pp 282-284

the Ruler of Bastar was a minor and everything was done on his behalf by the Resident. It seemed to me very improper for any agreement to be arrived at in these conditions binding upon Bastar State and allowing Hyderabad to exploit its resources and make it some kind of an economic colony. There were proposals also for Hyderabad to build a railway. I did not know the exact nature of these proposals; but the Central Provinces Government were intensely interested as their interests were being affected. They themselves were thinking of cooperating with Bastar State in regard to the exploitation of its mineral resources.

2. Lord Wavell wrote to me a rather vague letter in which he said that the interests of Bastar State were being sufficiently safeguarded and that he is referring the matter to the Political Department. I wrote to him again on two or three occasions about this matter.<sup>3</sup>

3. I now understand that final agreements between Hyderabad and Bastar are going to be signed very soon, within two weeks. I hope your States Department will take immediate action in the matter and try, if possible, to stop the signing of these agreements. Whether the agreements are good or bad, I cannot say, not having seen them. But it is very improper for the Resident to sell away valuable rights and bind down a State in this way without the fullest scrutiny by impartial experts. I understand that the Ruler is not only a minor but a halfwit. I hope urgent steps will be taken in this matter.

4. I am informed by Lord Ismay that our draft revised "Standstill" agreement has been sent to your States Department for action. I trust this will be forwarded to all the States to whom the previous draft was sent.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

3 See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol 1, pp 287-288

## 29. States Cannot be Allowed Independent Status<sup>1</sup>

India cannot tolerate States entering into independent relationship with foreign Powers as it will endanger the security of the country.

1. Inaugural speech at the Delhi Provincial Political Conference, Shahdara, Delhi, 1 July 1947. From *The Hindustan Times*, 2 July 1947.

I appeal to the States to join the Indian Union and participate on an equal footing in the work of constitution-making.

I thank the Delhi Provincial Congress Committee for giving me an opportunity to talk to you. For a long time I have not been able to attend such conferences. Due to overwork I have lost the habit of touring and over-concentration on office work makes one know less about the world.

I have so many things to tell you. Remember that you are at a difficult period in the country's life. What are the problems that we should tackle first? There are a number of problems, big and small, but we should not lose sight of the important ones and lay stress on problems of secondary importance. A commander knows that he cannot fight on all fronts, so also you should keep in mind what you should tackle first.

You all know that the existing British rule will end in a month and a half. Though we will not be completely free, at least a big step forward will be taken on August 15. What is to happen during this intervening period? With the coming of power in our hands, our responsibility will increase and a number of intricate problems will require a solution.

The partition of the country has placed immense difficulties in our way. We have, however, to face them courageously and build up a new country. We can face them only when we take up first things first. We will have to establish a strong Government which can maintain peace in the country. If there is no peace and the Government is weak there will be a breakdown of the administrative machinery. We should, therefore, build up a strong Government representative of the people. So far there was the British Government which put difficulties in our way. During the last few months the Interim Government has been functioning, but there were so many differences that nothing much could be done. These obstacles will not be in our way now. Our own disunity and attempt to do too many things at the same time might make it difficult for us to solve our problems.

For a long time we have cried *Inquilab Zindabad* and it is now five years that we made the Quit India declaration. Our wishes are now being fulfilled to a great extent. It is not only a great event in the history of India but of the world also.

The tree of imperialism planted by the British 150 years ago is being uprooted. Just as a big tree, when it is uprooted, shakes and loosens the earth on which it is planted, similarly with the coming end of the British power there is a lot of turmoil in the country.

The question of the States is one of the important problems facing us. We hope that even at the start most of the States will be with us. Some of them are, however, talking of revolt. We know what will be the end of this talk, but we are worried about what is going to happen during

the next two or three months. The Rulers of these States are following a wrong policy along with their Dewans.

It was the aim of the British policy to keep the Indian States isolated from the rest of India. For a long time the British Government insisted that Rulers of Indian States should obey them. Nawabs and Rajas were deposed if they refused to do so. But since the question of freedom of the country came in the forefront, the British Government attempted to revise their policy. During the last 17 years they tried to establish a new relationship with the States. An attempt was made to divide the country into Indian India and British India.

During the last nine months that we have been in the Interim Government we have had no power over the States Governments. Last year the British Government announced that paramountcy would end and that power would revert back to the States.<sup>2</sup> The British announcement has placed the States in a vacuum.

They have only one alternative, that is, to join the Indian Union whose constitution is being framed by the Constituent Assembly as equal members. There is no question of someone ruling over them.

But what are you going to do with those States which do not join the Indian Union? It is clear that if there is a strong Government in India it cannot tolerate smaller units entering into independent relationship with foreign Powers as it will endanger the security of the country. Supposing a smaller State enters into relationship with a foreign Power, then there is a danger that that Power may start with economic domination of the weaker State and ultimately establish its own rule. India cannot tolerate it.

The past 150 years of the British rule showed that when the East India Company established its hold in the country firmly it could not tolerate the independence of individual States. It fought with other foreign Powers like the French who had established themselves in the country so that there should be only one dominant power. It is evident that we cannot tolerate that smaller units should establish direct relationship with foreign countries so that the latter might establish their foothold in the country.

Unfortunately, there is a tendency in our country to treat all British pronouncements as the law of the land. We forget that times have changed. The time is coming when laws will be framed by the people.

2. The Cabinet Mission's memorandum of 12 May 1946 on the States treaties and paramountcy had stated that when an independent Government or Governments came into being "the rights of the States which flow from their relationship to the Crown will no longer exist and that all the rights surrendered by the States to the paramount power will return to the States."

It is clear that the Indian Union is going to be a strong power and the States which do not join us will be comparatively weaker. Except irritating and annoying us for a temporary period, the announcements of independence made by them do not serve any useful purpose. It is wrong to say that we intend to exploit or establish imperialist hold over the States. Free India will have a panchayat raj.

The problems of the States can be understood better in the context of the existing situation in India. There is an Interim Government in Delhi. Do you know what is happening in Gurgaon?<sup>3</sup> Hundreds of villages have been burnt and you may well ask what sort of Government we have. Similar is the story from Lahore. That ancient and great city is half burnt. The fact is that whatever is happening in the Punjab and other places is beyond our control. Except visiting these places occasionally and putting indirect pressure, we cannot do much.

We are between two ages. The British rule is going and they have no heart in the work of maintaining law and order. They do not care what happens after six months in India. During this period of transition it is necessary to have a strong Central Government. We hope that it will be formed and the things that are happening in Gurgaon and other places will not happen. Seventy or eighty thousand refugees from the N.W.F.P. and the Punjab have come to Delhi, Hardwar and other places. There is a great desire to help them and we will do our best. It breaks our hearts to see the mass oppression which forced large numbers of persons to leave their homes. We must see to it that these happenings do not occur after August 15.

There is a grievance about retrenchment. Every Government must undertake some responsibility for giving the people employment, food and clothing. During the war, lakhs of people were employed on war work. Expenses increased tremendously because of them. The war was over and they remained in service. The Government will be very glad to retain them all but how are they to pay them? That burden will fall on the people. There is no point in keeping people in employment without work for them to do. Prices have gone up and are going up and demands have been made for increasing wages.

3 Serious communal riots had broken out in villages adjoining Gurgaon. There was tension in Bulandshahr and other nearby towns because of the heavy influx of refugees. In Bulandshahr Section 144 had been promulgated for one month.

The Pay Commission's recommendations<sup>4</sup> will cost about Rs. 25 or 26 crores. Other wages also will have to be raised and the annual Central and Provincial Governments' expenditure may go up by about Rs. 100 crores. This does not touch non-Government employees. Wages of factory workers will also have to go up. If we spend half of our income on Government employees, what will be left for maintaining the army, which is necessary to meet external dangers and for internal security. In addition, we should have hospitals and other amenities for the people and, above all, money for executing planning on a big scale. We have to step up industrial and agricultural production and will have to invest crores of rupees. Where is all this money to come from? The basic fact is that although India is potentially a rich country, in fact today it is a very poor one.

There have been strikes and I am sure that there were grievances in every case. But today, when there is a shortage of goods—cloth, for example—strikes merely aggravate the shortage. Each day of strike lessens the national wealth. At this time our first problem is to increase production in every field. Workers in a few factories may strike and improve their condition but they hurt the whole country. Workers have a great responsibility, as they have great power.

Today the country has strength but there is great indiscipline. Everyone is pulling in a different direction. The Interim Government has had many troubles in the last nine months and I would not like even an enemy of mine to be in the chair of office under such conditions. These difficulties can be faced only if the Government are conscious that the people are willing to share their burden. We will fail before the world and ourselves if we have internal dissensions. We will not be able to build a strong Central Government and even little States may challenge us. Only a popular Government whose reins are with the people can be powerful.

Pakistan is a grievous wound but, now it has left, the greater part of India can be strong and united. We have been weakened by the secession but we must do nothing to increase that weakness.

4 On 16 May 1947, the Central Pay Commission recommended a minimum basic salary of Rs. 30 per month and a maximum salary of Rs. 2,000 per month. It also recommended grant of insurance cover to all employees and children's education allowance to those drawing a salary below Rs. 100. The age of retirement was fixed at 58.



### 30. Telegram to M.K. Vellodi<sup>1</sup>

Your telegram first July.<sup>2</sup> Sorry to learn of your distress at activities of agents of Indian States in London. We fully realise this, though we do not think it can produce much effect in present context. Time for making decisions in London is passing. However, every effort should be made to keep in touch with situation and inform us of it. Please meet Katju reaching London Sunday. Krishna Menon starting Friday next.

#### 2. Our position regarding States as follows:

Quite apart from question of lapse of paramountcy of British Crown, geography and questions of security make it impossible for us to recognise independence of any State; nor can we recognise any State joining Pakistan, unless it is contiguous to it and its people wish it to join. Most States have already joined Constituent Assembly of India. We expect others to do so soon. Those remaining over may do so, subject inevitably to their defence, foreign policy and some other matters being controlled by Indian Union. I have stated formally that any recognition by a foreign State of independence of an Indian State will be considered by us an unfriendly act.<sup>3</sup> Foreign trade relations of Indian States, leading to creation of foreign vested interests, also considered objectionable by us.

3. Sudhir Ghosh's telegram to me, dated 3rd July regarding Frontier referendum: no breach of pledge involved in abstention from referendum by Frontier Congress. Referendum nevertheless takes place. Method of asking people to choose was objected to as it became a communal question. Ideal of free Pathanistan does not mean complete independence or isolation from India. It means full autonomy for province and liberty of choice as to which Dominion to join. Frontier Congress entirely opposed to any intrusion of Afghanistan in a matter which appertains to India only.

4. On Muslim League side propaganda to build up pan-Islamic State from Frontier to West Asia. Frontier Congressmen entirely opposed to this as well as to joining Pakistan. However in order to avoid contest on purely communal issue and possibility of conflict on such issue they decided to abstain from taking part in referendum. Quite clear that there

1. New Delhi, 4 July 1947. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 888-889
2. " ..There are signs that agents for Indian States are at present very active in London money being freely spent in influencing people ..in regard to question of States Independence. Some counter propaganda appears necessary. .."
3. See *ante*, item 13.

is no demand for separate sovereign state as everyone realises Frontier Province too small and weak for such existence.

5. Sudhir Ghosh's statement regarding continuity of India completely correct position that certain areas have seceded from India and have been formed into a separate State of Pakistan. The rest of India continues as before and all treaties and engagements with it continue as when Burma was separated.

### 31. To the Maharaja of Kashmir<sup>1</sup>

\*\*\*It is hardly possible in the course of a brief letter to discuss any matter of importance. \*\*\* I would suggest to you, therefore, that it would be desirable for you to meet my colleagues and me and discuss matters of common interest \*\*\* I view the question entirely impersonally and I bear no grudge to anyone. Certainly I have no ill will for you.\*\*\* What I am concerned with is not the past but the future and I want to consider this future in terms of friendly cooperation with you and with others concerned. \*\*\* As far as possible, we want to go ahead with the cooperation of others.

I do not think it is possible for any Indian State to be completely independent. In the world today such small independent entities have no place, more especially in the frontier regions between two great States \*\*\* I appreciate your difficulties I am not unused to facing difficulties myself. The best way to do so is to face them and overcome them, and I would suggest to you that the time has come, indeed it is overdue now, that a definite change in State policy should take place \*\*\* I trust that you will appreciate what I have written and the advice I have ventured to give you. I am quite sure that it is for the good of Kashmir, for your good, and for the good of India as a whole

1 4 July 1947 *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol 2, by Pyarelal, (Ahmedabad, 1958), p 350. The omissions in the source are indicated by three stars (\*\*\*). The full text of the letter is not available

### 33. To the Maharaja of Manipur<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
7th July 1947

My dear Maharaja Sahib,<sup>2</sup>

Thank you for your letter of the 24th June. I am forwarding it to the Constituent Assembly office

As you know, we are anxious to meet your wishes in this matter,<sup>3</sup> in so far as we can. Our only difficulty has been how to fit in with the rules laid down for the purpose of election to the Constituent Assembly. Events are marching rapidly and every State has to come to some decision. That decision is not merely one of joining the Constituent Assembly, but joining the Indian Union I hope that, in any event, you will send your representative to discuss these matters, with full authority to speak on behalf of your State

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Constituent Assembly of India, Constitution Section, File No 84 (3)/Ser/47, Ministry of Law, Government of India
2. Bodh Chandra Singh, assumed charge of Manipur State in September 1941 and was recognised in his post by the Viceroy on 1 April 1942
3. The Maharaja of Manipur had requested that his Government's request to have their own special and separate representative in the Constituent Assembly be granted by reshuffling the allocation of seats

### 34. To the Maharaja of Samthar<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
7th July 1947

Dear Maharaja Saheb,

I am sorry for the delay in answering your letter of the 20th June<sup>2</sup> I am passing it on to the new States Department of the Government of India

- 1 J N Collection
- 2 Maharaja R.C. Singh stated that Samthar—a small treaty State in Bundelkhand—was willing to join the Indian Union But as that State was very small he was trying for the formation of a Central India confederation In case no such confederation was formed, he desired some sort of political agreement with the Indian Union

SELECTED WORKS OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

As far as I can say, the first thing to be done is for all States, big and small, to associate themselves with the Indian Union through the Constituent Assembly. Other matters can then be considered and decided upon.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

**35. To N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
7th July 1947

My dear Gopalaswami,

Thank you for your letter of the 6th July. You know that we tried to do our utmost to get the draft Bill changed in so far as the States were concerned. Immediately after receipt of the draft Bill, I wrote to the Viceroy again on the subject and pointed out all that you have said. I gave a note to him to be telegraphed and I gave a further note to Lord Ismay who was leaving immediately after for London. I doubt, however, if the British Government will make any more substantial changes. Stafford Cripps has got fixed ideas on this subject.

The position, therefore, is that we have to rely more on circumstances and the strength of the Union than on any legislation of the British Parliament. One thing is certain—that we cannot possibly permit Berar to join Hyderabad State. We are not going to do so.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection

**36. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
9 July 1947

My dear Vallabhbhai,

Here is the piece of information which I showed to you. The note is dated 5 July, and is anonymous.

## THE INTEGRATION OF STATES

The Hyderabad Government have just placed an order for four crores of rupees worth ammunition with Mr. Kral,<sup>2</sup> calling himself representative of the Czechoslovakian Government, and the Army Commander Edroos<sup>3</sup> has left today for Europe to arrange for immediate despatch. Dated 5 July.

It may or may not be of value, but it is certainly worth enquiring into, in so far as you can. I shall try to enquire into the matter by other means.<sup>4</sup>

I am also informed by a reliable authority that the Hyderabad Government has come to an arrangement with the Birmingham Small Arms Company for supply of arms

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

2. Karel Bedrech Kral, a Czech national and an expert in optical instruments and gun sights, had entered India under the assumed name of Harold Arthur Whitehead. He flew to Karachi on 12 July 1947. Orders were issued for his arrest on return to Bombay as he was suspected of smuggling currency out of India and transacting a deal in firearms with the Nizam
3. El Edroos, the Commander-in-Chief of the Hyderabad forces, had gone at this time to London to buy equipment for the army. Under him the army in Hyderabad had grown in numbers from 20,000 to 35,000.
4. The Czechoslovakian Government informed the Indian Government that the Hyderabad Government had approached them for the purchase of arms and ammunition worth 3 crores of rupees. The Indian Government replied that if they complied with the order it would be regarded as an unfriendly act

### 37. To G.P. Huthesing<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
14 July 1947

My dear Raja,

I have your letter of the 9th July with the note C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar gave you. I appreciate greatly all the trouble you have taken in this matter and your offer to help. I fear, however, that nothing can be done on these lines, certainly not by me. As I wrote to you previously, the matter has gone too far for individual approaches. In any event the right person to deal with it is Sardar Patel who is officially in charge of our States Department. C.P. is in Delhi at present having been summoned by the Viceroy.

It is a little difficult to mention in a letter all that has happened during the past six months or more.<sup>2</sup> I have come to the conclusion that C.P. is completely unbalanced and equally unreliable. His vanity is paranoiac and has gone beyond all normal limits. Even if he had been treated curtly by any of us, there are some things which are not done by any decent or patriotic individual. His complaints of ill treatment in Delhi have no basis so far as I am concerned. It is true I had not called on him. As a matter of fact I have not called on a single person from the Viceroy, Princes or others; I have only visited people by special appointment on business or for a meal when invited. Normally I do not even know when C.P. is here. Once I invited him to lunch, and we had a talk.

He has done many things in the past few months which are difficult to forgive. What Sardar Patel wrote to him, which seems to have hurt him, was partly taken from a letter from C.P. to Attlee—a very objectionable letter which was forwarded to the Viceroy.<sup>3</sup> Throughout these months he has been carrying on an intrigue with Bhopal and coming in the way of States coming into the Union. His latest stunt of appointing an envoy to Pakistan was, and must presumably he meant to be, an insult to the Union of India. His references to our embassy in Moscow are so utterly irresponsible that the Viceroy said we would have to take some action in the matter. In some of his speeches and statements which abound, he has descended to vulgarity and indecency. What is happening in Travancore today is pretty bad. For a man to indulge in all these activities because his vanity is hurt is to demonstrate a complete lack of balance.

2 For example, on 10 July 1947, Pattam Thanu Pillai, President of the Travancore State Congress, had wired to Patel, “. Travancore is subjected to unbridled dictatorship by an irresponsible non-Travancorean Dewan and complete negation of law and order to enforce his policy of keeping the state outside Indian Union against the wishes of people. Pray immediate inquiry by an impartial agent and steps to ensure good Government.”

3 Referring to Listowel's statement at a press conference in London on 4 July 1947 in which he had referred to the declaration of independence by Hyderabad and Travancore, Ramaswami Aiyar, in his telegram of 6 July 1947 to Attlee, stated that Travancore could not be forced to join a Dominion which had “at this critical juncture in world history” established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Republic. He further stated that although Travancore had offered to enter into “the most friendly treaty and other relations” with the two Dominions in regard to defence, communications and other matters the independence of Travancore was essential for its existence. He also praised Patel for his statement of 5 July 1947 in which he had said, “The States have already accepted the basic principle that for defence, foreign affairs and communications they would come into an Indian Union. . In other matters, we would scrupulously respect their autonomous existence.”

The question, therefore, is not of his agreeing to certain terms in regard to cooperating with the Indian Union but something much more serious.

As a matter of fact his complaint that the Constituent Assembly has accepted certain proposals of the Union Powers Committee is completely baseless. The matter has not been considered by the Constituent Assembly yet. It is a tragedy that a man of his ability should direct that ability to base and harmful ends. Ability is very desirable, but even more necessary in a human being is integrity of character and balance.

So far as I am concerned, I have not mentioned his name at all during the last few months. I have sometimes referred to the Indian States as such or to those States that claimed independence

I should not advise you to get entangled in this rather complicated matter. I do not myself propose to have much to do with it directly unless circumstances force me. Our States Department under Sardar Patel will deal with it, or the whole Government of India will deal with it. I am sending your letter and C.P.'s note to Sardar Patel

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal

### 38 To Hiralal Shastri<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
July 14, 1947

My dear Hiralalji,

I feel that it is inadvisable and inexpedient for me to continue my membership of the Standing Committee of the All India States People's Conference. I find that there is considerable difference in approach to the problems that face us between the Acting President, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, and myself. Dr. Pattabhi evidently does not approve of much that I say or do and in the circumstances it is right that he should have a free hand to shape the policy of the States People's Conference. I regret dissociating myself from the Standing Committee which has honoured me so much in the past. Of course, this does not mean any slackening in my interest in the problem of the Indian States. I think this is the most vital problem today for us in India and I shall endeavour to be of service to the people of the States in such ways as I can. But owing to

<sup>1</sup> Hiralal Shastri Papers, N M M.L.

differences of approach and temperament I find it difficult to function as a member of the executive of the organisation.

I should like to convey to you and to all the members of the Standing Committee my grateful thanks for all the courtesy and cooperation which they have extended to me in the past.

You will, therefore, kindly treat this letter as my resignation from the membership of the Standing Committee of the All India States People's Conference.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 39. On His Resignation from the Standing Committee<sup>1</sup>

Statements have appeared in the press about my offer of resignation from the Standing Committee of the All India States People's Conference and various speculations have been indulged in. The report as it appears in the press is very largely incorrect more especially in its reference to Travancore.<sup>2</sup> It is true that for a number of reasons I decided to offer my resignation from the Standing Committee of the States People's Conference

These reasons had absolutely nothing to do with Travancore, but were mainly based on the fact that I could not give the time that a Standing Committee member should give to the work of the States people.

Naturally my interest continues and I am of the opinion that the question of the States is of the most vital significance at the present moment in India. In offering my resignation I assured the States People's Conference that I would continue to be of service to them in every way that was possible for me.

1. Statement published in *The Hindustan Times*, 19 July 1947.

2. It was reported in the newspapers that Nehru had resigned his membership of the Standing Committee of the All India States People's Conference because of the divergence of views between himself and the Acting President of the Conference, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, in regard to the attitude towards the States and specially towards Travancore



There has been no question of sending anyone from here to organize the popular struggle in the Travancore State.<sup>3</sup> No one has suggested this. What happened was that Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar publicly invited newspapermen and others to go to Travancore and to see for themselves how far civil and other liberties existed there. In view of this invitation it was suggested that one or more persons might visit Travancore for this particular purpose of observing after giving information of their visit to the Dewan of the State

I would like to add that there is no vital difference of opinion between Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya and myself in regard to the States problem in India.

3. A meeting of Malayalee residents of Delhi, held on 14 July 1947, expressed sympathy with the people of Travancore in their struggle for responsible Government and appealed to the Indian National Congress to give them "direct aid and advice" if they resorted to a struggle against the autocratic form of Government.

#### 40. The Future of Gilgit<sup>1</sup>

The question of the retrocession of the Gilgit subdivision came up before me in April last.<sup>2</sup> I then expressed the opinion that the proper time to consider this would be early next year when the picture of the constitution of the Indian Union as also Kashmir's association with it would be much clearer and the problem could be considered in all its aspects. As I pointed out then, this in no way prejudiced the claims of Kashmir. The only argument that was advanced against this was based on the severity of the winter climate and the difficulty of taking any steps. The proposal then was that retrocession should take place in September 1947.

1. Note, 19 July 1947. Ministry of External Affairs, File No 267-CA/47, pp 28-30/notes, National Archives of India  
 2. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol 2, p 278

2. The Crown Representative said that it would be better and more in consonance with the policy of achieving the greatest possible devolution of paramountcy by the end of 1947 to terminate the agreement about Gilgit in September 1947. I was informed of this and I said in view of this decision I would raise no further objection.
3. Since this was done further developments have taken place and it has now been proposed to terminate the agreement about Gilgit immediately and to hand over that sub-division to the Kashmir Government. The matter has come up before the Defence Department indirectly in connection with the future of the scouts and the wireless equipment which were sent from here. So far as those two minor matters are concerned I have nothing to say and it is for the Defence Department to decide.
4. In regard to the major matter of handing over Gilgit I would suggest that no immediate steps be taken. This does not involve any real delay and in any event the date previously fixed, i.e., September 1947 is still far off
5. It is true that in view of the Indian Independence Act certain other consequences follow. But plans are being made for standstill agreements and other arrangements with the States and any premature steps taken now might have consequences which do not fit in with the future arrangements. It is probable that some decision might be made by the Kashmir Government in regard to future association with the Dominion in the course of the next two or three weeks. It seems to me obviously desirable for us to wait till this decision is made and then to take such steps as might flow from the decision or the standstill arrangements.
6. This applies not only to Gilgit but to other States also where there may be cantonments and Government of India troops might be stationed. These troops should continue where they are for the present.
7. This is a matter also for the States Department to consider and I suggest that the file might be sent to them.

**41. To the Maharaja of Patiala<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
25 July 1947

Dear Maharaja,<sup>2</sup>

I am writing to you about a matter which does not concern me in the least and about which normally I would not write to you. You must forgive me, therefore, for butting in in this way.

2. I learnt today of a story that is going round to the effect that at a private meeting of some Rulers it was suggested by the Maharaja of Gwalior that the Nawab of Rampur should also be invited. It is reported that you replied that you wanted no Muslim and, therefore, the Nawab should not be asked. This was apparently reported to the Nawab of Rampur possibly with some exaggeration, and the Nawab is rather upset about it. The story is going round with suitable embellishment.

3 I have no idea what truth there is in this story. But the fact that it is going round distressed me. You will realise, no doubt, that such stories create needless ill will. I am sure you would put an end to it in some suitable way. Because of this I decided to draw your attention to it.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Papers, N M.M.L.

2. Yadavendra Singh (1913-1974), succeeded as Maharaja in 1938, served in Second World War in Malaya, Western Desert, Italy and Burma; Rajpramukh of the Patiala and East Punjab States Union, 1948-56, Indian delegate to the United Nations, 1956-57 and to the U.N.E.S.C.O conference in Paris, 1958, led the Indian delegation to the Food and Agriculture Organization conferences in Rome several times from 1959 to 1969, Ambassador to Italy, 1965-66, Member, Punjab Legislative Assembly, 1967-68, Ambassador to the Netherlands, 1971-74.

**42. To the Maharaja of Patiala<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
25 July 1947

Dear Maharaja,

A friend of mine has written to me about a lady worker named Kamala Devi of Narnaul who is reported to have been arrested by the Patiala

1 J.N. Papers, N M.M.L.

police. She is said to be a young woman, 25 years of age. I understand she has been sentenced to a year's rigorous imprisonment with some others. I do not know what her offence was. But the friend who has written to me is a person whose opinion I value and he tells me that she is a fine young woman and is like a sister to him. I understand that she is at present in the Patiala central jail and is not being treated even as a political prisoner. I shall be grateful if you will kindly look into her case and show clemency to her.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 43. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
27 July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

You will remember that soon after your arrival in India as Viceroy I discussed Kashmir with you. It was my intention then to visit Kashmir. But on your telling me that you would go there yourself, I decided to postpone my visit. Your visit to Kashmir was from my particular point of view not a success and things continued as before.<sup>2</sup> Indeed there was considerable disappointment at the lack of results of your visit.

2 My desire to visit Kashmir remained and indeed I felt it my particular duty to go there. But in view of various other happenings following one another I continued to postpone my visit. I feel now that I must go there very soon if I have to go at all. I know very well that the work in Delhi is important and urgent and it is not easy for me to leave it. But Kashmir has become a first priority for me.

1 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 12, p 368

2 Reporting his talk with Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru Mountbatten wrote to the Maharaja of Kashmir on 27 June 1947: "I further went on to say that you were most anxious not to have any political leaders coming up at this time, since any form of propaganda speeches at this moment might well arouse communal feelings

Mr Nehru was very upset, and said he felt he must go up to Kashmir himself at once. I told him that I did not feel that his services could be spared from the Centre with only seven weeks remaining in which to fix up the details of partition and the transfer of power; and he promised to think it over."

3. I have decided, therefore, to go to Kashmir about the 4th of August and to stay there four or five days. I shall fix up my programme more definitely in a day or two. I shall go, of course, as a private individual and not as a Member of Government. My chief object in going there will be to meet my many friends and colleagues and more specially the common folk who have suffered so much owing to the disastrous policy followed by the State authorities for over a year. If it is possible for me, I shall meet Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah who is in prison. I shall endeavour to come back by the 10th of August.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

#### 44. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

28 7 47

Dear Bapu,

I have seen the Viceroy's letter.<sup>2</sup> What am I to say about it? I wrote to you this morning that I would not trouble you any more about your programme. That is entirely for you to judge.

I am a little tired of hearing what Pandit Kak feels or thinks. I am not concerned with it. Indeed I think that it would be normally right to do the opposite of what he advises. For many months—ever since Mountbatten came—this question of your going or mine has been discussed and postponed. I have had enough of this business. This is not my way of doing anything. I hardly remember anything that has exasperated me quite so much as this affair.

It is for you to judge what you should do. Meanwhile I shall go ahead with my plans. As between visiting Kashmir when my people need me there and being Prime Minister, I prefer the former.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

1. Pyarelal Papers, N M M.L.

2. In his letter to Mahatma Gandhi of 28 July 1947, Mountbatten said that Kak told him that (as conveyed earlier to Mahatma Gandhi) the Kashmir Government was "very anxious not to have the visit from a political leader . . ." and that although he feared even a visit from Mahatma Gandhi might provoke violence, the fact that the latter was "known to preach non-violence would reduce the risk in your (Mahatma Gandhi's) case to less than half the risk if Pandit Nehru came." He further asked Mountbatten to inform Mahatma Gandhi that if he felt the visit very necessary then the Mahatma's visit was better than Nehru's, since the public was mentally prepared for it.

## 45. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

28.7.47

Dear Bapu,

Thank you for your letter. I have also written to the Viceroy informing him that I propose to go to Kashmir about the 4th August for 4 or 5 days. I have not mentioned your name in this connection

I have nothing to suggest about your Punjab programme or later.

I agree that the Viceroy should move to a smaller house. The only present difficulty is one of finding suitable accommodation and making arrangements for changing over when we are so busy.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

I am asking Badshah Khan to see me today at my house at 2 30

1 Pyarelal Papers, N M M L

## 46. The Projected Visit to Kashmir<sup>1</sup>

Pandit Nehru held forth at some length about his mental distress and defended his visit on the grounds that (a) nothing would be more natural than that Congress should send a high-level emissary to lay before the Government of Kashmir the advantages of joining the Dominion of India, and (b) that it was well known that he was overworked; that he would like to go away for three or four days rest somewhere in any case, and that Kashmir would be a delightful place in which to have a brief holiday. The fact that he might be engaged on local work would be a sufficient change of occupation to give him the necessary rest.<sup>2</sup>

1 Mountbatten's note on his meeting with Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru and Patel, on 29 July 1947 at New Delhi Extracts *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 12, pp 397-399

2 At the meeting Mountbatten had said that since Kashmir had the choice of joining India or Pakistan Nehru's visit would be regarded as a "piece of straightforward political lobbying" This effect could be somewhat mitigated if instead of Nehru Mahatma Gandhi went Patel considered that Mahatma Gandhi's visit would be the lesser evil Finally it was decided that Mahatma Gandhi should go

47. To Hiralal Shastri<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
5 August 1947

My dear Hiralalji,

I received some days ago your letter asking me to withdraw my resignation from the Standing Committee.<sup>2</sup> If you and my other colleagues feel that I should withdraw it I shall gladly do so, as I do not want to do anything which might injure the cause of the States people

But I am not sure whether it will be proper for me in the future to continue as a member of a committee like this. However we shall see to this later.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.

2 Hiralal Shastri had on 30 July 1947 conveyed to Nehru his wish and that of the other members of the Standing Committee that he (Nehru) should continue as a member of the Standing Committee of the All India States People's Conference

48. To Begum Abdullah<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
August 8, 1947

My dear Begum Sahiba,

I have not been able to meet Mahatma Gandhi since his return from Kashmir as he went direct to Patna, but I have had some reports of his visit and he has also written to me.<sup>2</sup> I am very happy to learn from his letter as well as from other accounts of the success of this visit. I must congratulate you and your committee on this. I am sorry that his visit was such a brief one, but in the circumstances it was not possible to extend it.

1. J.N. Collection

2 Giving an account of his visit to Kashmir from 1 to 4 August 1947 Mahatma Gandhi wrote to Nehru on 6 August 1947 that the Maharaja and Maharani of Kashmir, in their talk with him, had admitted that with the lapse of paramountcy the true paramountcy of the people of Kashmir would commence. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad had assured him that the result of the free vote of the people would be in favour of Kashmir joining the Indian Union. provided Sheikh Abdullah and his co-prisoners were released. Kak, on being told by him (Mahatma Gandhi) about his unpopularity among the people, had written to the Maharaja that "on a sign from him" he would gladly resign

I am told that he expressed a wish to come back to Kashmir if his other engagements in East Bengal and Bihar permitted this. I earnestly hope that this may be possible.

Some time ago I sent you a draft for Rs. 5,000 for relief work. I was told later that this sum had not been used by you and there was some question as to how the money should be employed. Thereupon I sent you a telegram making it quite clear that the money should only be used for relief of the poor and distressed and that it was entirely in your personal discretion as to how to spend it. I hope you are utilising it for the object I have mentioned.

I am now sending you another draft for Rs. 5,000/- for a like purpose. That is to say, that this money is also to be utilised for relief work only and you are to be the sole judge of how it is to be used for this purpose. There is no question of anyone else or any committee being consulted in this matter.

I might mention that the money I have sent to you comes out of a relief fund which is earmarked. Therefore, this money cannot be used for any purpose except for relief of the poor and distressed.

I am sending today separately a draft for Rs. 5,000/- to Dr. Shambhunath Peshin<sup>2</sup> for the National Hospital.

Please send my affectionate greetings to Sheikh Sahib. I hope it would be possible for us to meet before long.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

- 2 A leading member of the Muslim Conference, was arrested in 1938 for publishing a manifesto, the "National Demand"

#### 49. To Vallabhbhai Patel<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
13 August 1947

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I enclose a letter from the Prime Minister of Madras sending a report

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol. 5, p 447.



about propaganda by the Dewan of Travancore in Anjengo.<sup>2</sup> This will no doubt interest you.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal

2. In his letter of 8 August, O.P. Ramaswami Reddiar informed Nehru that according to a report from the district magistrate of Tinneveli, the Travancore State authorities were threatening to raid Anjengo, which was under British jurisdiction, as they thought that it was being used as the headquarters by the agitators, who had given notice of starting a direct action campaign from 1 August. The State authorities had also not allowed a consignment of 100 bags of rice to be taken to Anjengo through Kadakkavur which was in the territory of Travancore

## 50. To the Maharaja of Cochin<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
14 August 1947

My dear Maharaja Saheb,

Thank you for your letter of the 9th August. I have also had a talk with your Dewan, Mr. Karunakara Menon.<sup>2</sup> It is very difficult for me to give any advice in detail without closely studying the situation existing in Cochin and coming into contact with the various leaders of public opinion there. All I can do is to give some general indication of what should be done. The country is passing today through rapid transitional phase and this inevitably provokes psychological and emotional responses in the people. The Indian States cannot escape these responses. It is desirable to understand these feelings and to meet them in so far as we can. A Government, however efficient it may be, loses its efficiency if it is not in line with popular sentiment. The psychological approach, therefore, is always important.

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. C.P. Karunakara Menon; Secretary, Madras Service Commission, 1932; Secretary, Development Department, Government of Madras, 1940, Regional Food Commissioner, Madras 1943; later appointed Dewan of Cochin.

2. You have already announced full responsible government for your State and set up a committee with that end in view.<sup>3</sup> This committee seems to have taken rather a long time to report. There appears no reason why it should not expedite this work and report soon. The subsequent steps, that is preparation of electoral rolls and elections could also be arranged fairly rapidly. The whole process should not take a long time.

3. While this is done, something in the nature of an approach in the present seems desirable to fit in with the psychological atmosphere of today. What form exactly this should take it is a little difficult for me to indicate except that it must be appealing to the people that another substantial step has been taken towards responsible government. I understand that Mr. Gopalaswami Ayyangar has suggested that popular Ministers should be put in charge of Law and Order and Finance, but that there should be this reservation—that important matters are referred to the Dewan during this interim period. In effect the Government should function as an interim government dealing with all subjects in a joint way. In regard to some subjects like Law and Order and Finance, important matters might be referred to the Dewan so as to avoid any wrong step being taken.

I do not quite know how this will work out, but it seems a feasible proposition.

You yourself have suggested something somewhat different, though in practice it may mean much the same thing. It is for you and your advisors to determine which way is more suitable at present.

With all good wishes to you.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

<sup>3</sup> The Government of the State was carried on by the Maharaja through the Dewan in relation to "reserved subjects" and through ministers, responsible to the legislature, in relation to "transferred subjects." A Legislative Council with a predominant non-official majority and elected on a very wide franchise had been constituted.

## THE NORTH WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE

## 1. Note on the Situation in the N.W.F.P.<sup>1</sup>

1. In appraising the situation in the N.W.F.P. we have to take into consideration the state of affairs there as well as the state of affairs in India as a whole. The two are interrelated and affect each other. It is clear that the persons in the best position to judge of internal conditions in the N.W.F.P. are Badshah Khan, Dr. Khan Sahib, the Ministers and other leaders of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement. Badshah Khan, with his intimate knowledge of this movement and the position in the Province, is the best person to judge. Indeed any decision that may be made must have his agreement and sanction. Otherwise it will not prove to be effective.

2. While the best judges of the position within the Province are necessarily Badshah Khan and others there, there are other factors which perhaps are not so clearly before them and which might help them to come to the right decision. I am stating below my own view of the situation as a whole for their consideration. But, as I have said above, the final decision must necessarily rest with them.

3. There is no doubt that the Governor and many of the Frontier officials have not only not cooperated with the Provincial Government<sup>2</sup> but have actually sometimes obstructed its work. Their sympathies lie with the leaders of the Muslim League movement in the Frontier Province many of whom are old loyalists of the British Government with whom they have had previous contacts. The main urge, however, for them is an anti-Congress and anti-Khudai Khidmatgar urge and they cannot get rid of it. So long as these old elements continue in the Frontier in high office, there is going to be no new set-up there and no successful effort at carrying on a peaceful and progressive administration. These people will have to go. Indeed there is little doubt that they will go fairly soon. But some of them at least, or most of them, are likely to continue for another two or three months till final decisions are made. It is difficult, therefore, to have a new set-up during these two or three months, though it is possible for a change in Governorship to take place much sooner. We have thus to adapt ourselves to these conditions during these coming two months.

1. New Delhi, 8 June 1947 Pyarelal Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. There was a Congress Ministry headed by Khan Sahib in the N.W.F.P. at this time

4. The Muslim League agitation in the Frontier was in many ways encouraged by these British and Indian officials. It could easily have been dealt with if this support had been lacking.

5. A certain difficulty has arisen in the past few months in regard to these officials. It was well known that they were going, though the date was not fixed. Owing to public controversies about them the matter ceased to be one of removal of one or two particular men but became an issue affecting nearly all the officials there. The result was that even individuals, who might have been removed, continued. In any event they are nearly all leaving the Frontier soon and we must proceed on that basis. There is no particular point in our raising this issue of *en masse* withdrawal now. We may emphasise the cases of one or two particular individuals.

6. Partly due to the Muslim League agitation and partly to the insistence of the Governor, the question arose about two months ago regarding fresh elections and Section 93 regime.<sup>3</sup> This was strongly objected to by us as not only being unconstitutional but a surrender to violence. The fact that election had been held a little over a year ago was pointed out and it seemed totally unnecessary to hold another election on the same issue. Any such election, it was stated, would lead to bloodshed on a big scale. The idea of holding elections or of having Section 93 was given up.

7. Then the question of referendum came up not exactly on the Pakistan issue but in view of certain changes and developments in the all-India situation. Even then it was pointed out by me that such a referendum was unnecessary and undesirable and likely to lead to unfortunate consequences.<sup>4</sup> In any event there could be no proper election till the Muslim League agitation was withdrawn completely and the consent of the Provincial Government taken.

8. Later the main plan for changes in India was developed. In this plan an opportunity was given to certain provinces or certain parts of the provinces to opt out of the Indian Union. The result of this was likely to be that Western Punjab would secede from the Union and this would mean that the N.W.F.P. was physically cut off from the Indian Union. A new situation thus arose and it was again stated that in view of this new situation it would be advisable to have a referendum in the Frontier in order to determine to which Constituent Assembly the N.W.F.P. desired to be-

3. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 2, pp 326-328.

4 See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol 2, pp 117-119.

long. The proposal, therefore, was not just meant for the N.W.F.P., but became part of a larger plan which provided for referendum in the N.W.F.P., Baluchistan and Sylhet. It seemed a logical and reasonable proposal apart from the particular circumstances prevailing. Our attitude had been all along that we are not opposed to ascertaining the wishes of the people of the N.W.F.P. provided this was not a submission to violence and provided that this was part of a larger plan. It was difficult to oppose this proposal in theory in this context. Even then it was pointed out that the peculiar circumstances of the N.W.F.P. must be taken into consideration and in any event the assent of the Provincial Ministry was essential.

9. The general plan was thus worked out and made public a week ago.<sup>5</sup> This plan laid down that in the event of Western Punjab decided in favour of secession, the Frontier Province should have a referendum on the issue as to whether they would join the present Constituent Assembly of which they have been members, or the new Assembly that might be formed. Thus the question of having a referendum in the N.W.F.P. depended on certain previous decisions in the Punjab and Bengal. If those decisions were not taken in the Punjab and Bengal, then there is no question of referendum in the N.W.F.P. The issue is thus still open. But in all likelihood parts of Bengal and the Punjab will decide in favour of secession and so we may take it as almost granted that the question will arise for decision in the N.W.F.P.

10. The present decision is that the British Government and the Viceroy are definitely committed to this referendum. Some of us are also more or less committed, though we have always made it clear that the Provincial Government should have the final voice in agreeing or not to the referendum. In practice it may be said that we are largely committed to this plan as a whole including the referendum. In the Working Committee's letter to the Viceroy last week<sup>6</sup> the only point raised was that the Frontier people should be allowed to vote for a sovereign State

11. The question of referendum, therefore, appears to be a settled one and it is not quite clear how we can get out of it. For the Viceroy it is still more difficult. Any change in the plan which has been produced

5. The British Government's plan for the constitutional transfer of power from British to Indian hands was officially announced in New Delhi on 3 June 1947 which included a plan for referendum in the N.W.F.P. without any disturbance of the existing Ministry to decide which of the two Constituent Assemblies the Province would join

6 See *ante*, section 3, item 1.

after long consultations and approval would in any event be difficult. If an attempt was made to change, strong objection would be taken by other parties and it will not be easy to justify that change. This may even lead to conflict on a big scale. We may, therefore, take it as a settled fact that a referendum will take place.

12. It is proposed to have this referendum organised by British military officers to be imported from outside. Every effort will be made to maintain peaceful conditions and prevent any violence or intimidation. The Provincial Government would be closely associated with the machinery for this referendum.

13. Normally speaking I do not think there is much chance of any big violent conflict. But of this the provincial leaders are the best judges. Anyway every precaution would be taken to prevent this or to suppress it as soon as it arises.

14. I do not know what the result of such a referendum will be. A number of British officials from the Governor downwards, who are antagonistic to the Congress, have expressed their opinion that the chances are 50:50 and that the referendum may well result in a victory for the Congress there though this is not by any means certain.

15. The proposal made that the people should be allowed to vote for sovereign independence raises certain difficulties. The Viceroy said he can only agree if the parties agree. Apart from this, if once we accept the principle of sovereign independence being voted upon by a province, this will create complications in regard to some other provinces and many of the States. Indeed such a proposal was made for Bengal and ultimately rejected. It may also introduce an element of confusion in the voting when three issues are before the voter, i.e., to vote for either Constituent Assembly or for sovereign status. Votes may well be split.

16. Another suggestion has been made that the Frontier Congress should keep out of the referendum or waive the right to the referendum. This waiver, of course, means accepting the Muslim League's dominance in the N.W.F.P. It is in effect a surrender to the Muslim League agitation or prospective agitation. Whether it will lead to peaceful conditions or not, it is difficult to say. But I imagine that any such waiver or surrender is even more likely to lead to conflict and bloodshed because the Muslim League would celebrate this surrender as a great victory for the League and many of the Khudai Kidmatgars might not like this

17. A waiver of this type means giving victory to the League. They would be justified then in claiming that the present Ministry does not represent the bulk of the population. What will happen then, I do not know. But it seems difficult for the Provincial Ministry to continue after a decision has been given against them by a referendum or by a waiver of referendum. What arrangements can be made then for the carrying on of Government? Section 93 will be avoided. Possibly the question will immediately arise of another election to the provincial legislature because of all these difficulties. Having avoided the referendum, shall we then have to face an election which is much more complicated matter because of personal issues that are involved? Thus by not having the referendum we do not avoid trouble and difficulty and the Provincial Ministry cannot continue. The election takes place anyhow with all its possible evil consequences.

18. It seems to me that even an avoidance of referendum will not ensure tranquillity in the Province. There are bound to be conflicts and bloodshed. The only other course is a peaceful submission to the Pakistan idea, and I doubt very much if most of the Pathans will agree to it.

19. We do not know what developments may take place during this month. I think that these developments might possibly affect the situation to our advantage in some degree. It would be anyhow wrong to commit ourselves against the referendum without knowing these developments.

20. It is stated that there will be violence if a referendum is held. But even if a referendum was not held, and perhaps more so then, there might be violence on a big scale

21. It must be remembered that the future of the N.W.F.P. for some considerable period is going to be decided. None of us can permit a wrong decision to be taken without fighting that to the utmost. To keep away from the referendum is to ensure a wrong decision and to do so not by the ordinary democratic process but by private arrangement. This seems to me a very dangerous procedure to follow both in regard to avoidance of violence and regarding our own future in the N.W.F.P. To fight democratically and to be defeated does not weaken us for long and we can renew the struggle in other ways later. But to give up without a struggle means a certain lack of integrity through fear of consequences and leads to the collapse of the organisation which was unable to face the issue.

22. In view of all these circumstances, it seems to me that the only right



course is for us to accept the referendum and to prepare for it with all our strength. We have a good chance of winning it and even if we lose by a small margin, we would have struck a big blow at Pakistan. We should go to this referendum on the cry that we want the largest measure of freedom and independence in the Frontier as also help to develop the Frontier's resources. We shall neither get the help nor the freedom if we are allied to the Punjab which will dominate over the Frontier. But if we continue in the existing Constituent Assembly, we shall get the help and much more freedom and independence than the Punjab can give us. This is not a straight issue of sovereign independence but a slight variation of that theme which should prove helpful. In effect, after Pakistan comes into being in Western Punjab and the Frontier is cut off from India, the N.W.F.P. will inevitably have, because of this cutting off and other reasons, a very great deal of autonomy and independence. It may be possible for us here to make this clear when the time comes for it publicly. That time can only come after the Punjab and others have made a decision.

23. I see no other course open to us in the Frontier. If there is risk in this course, there are far greater risks of bloodshed in other courses. The course suggested is a brave, frank course of accepting the battle peacefully. To give up the battle, when final decisions are being taken, will result in deep psychological injury to our people.

24. Another factor to be borne in mind is the personality of the present Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten. He is obviously playing and going to play an important part in various developments. I have no doubt about his sincerity and *bona fides* and his desire to do the right thing. To some extent he is naturally bound by the past and the present set-up; but he is trying his best to go ahead in the right direction. He realises the difficulties of the Frontier problem and wants to do everything in his power to solve them. I think he will prove helpful. He is convinced, however, that in the peculiar conditions that are arising in India now owing to possible secession of some parts, a chance must be given to the Frontier people to decide themselves by means of a referendum. He has definitely committed himself to this and he cannot get out of it without grave injury to his own prestige and impartiality. He would probably prefer to resign than to face such a situation.

25. I suggest that this note might be considered by Badshah Khan, Dr Khan Sahib and other leaders in the Frontier. They might confer together and give us their own reactions. It is very necessary that Badshah Khan should come here himself for fuller discussions after he has consulted his

colleagues. The meeting of the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. next week affords a suitable opportunity for coming here.<sup>6</sup> In any event the matter is too vital to be disposed of without the fullest consultation and thought. Our future depends upon it and we dare not remain passive at such a time. I hope, therefore, that Badshah Khan will come to Delhi next week and that before he comes he will fully consult his colleagues in the N.W.F.P.

6. The meeting of the Working Committee took place on 12, 13 and 16 June and that of the A.I.C.C. on 14 and 15 June 1947.

## 2. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

9.6.47

Dear Bapu,

I enclose 2 copies of a note<sup>2</sup> on the Frontier. You will deal with it as you think best. If it is to be sent to Badshah Khan, a messenger will have to take it. In any event Badshah Khan will I hope come here next week.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

1. Pyarelal Papers, N M M.L.

2. See the preceding item.

## 3. The Approach to the Referendum<sup>1</sup>

The position is a rather complicated one but some facts are clear enough. We have, willingly or unwillingly, accepted the referendum and this is going to take place. Even the British military officers selected to supervise the referendum have been approved of by Dr. Khan Sahib. Thus the choice is either to contest the referendum with vigour or to boycott it. In either event the procedure adopted will have to be carefully considered.

1. Note, 13 June 1947. J.N. Collection.

The boycott is not an easy weapon in regard to a referendum. It is difficult to say that we will not give our opinion on a particular issue referred to the electorate. Such a boycott works in some kind of a vacuum. Of course it may be said that the questions put are not proper and do not enable the electorate to give the answers they wish to give. This may be a legitimate argument but it does not take us far. In any event the result of a boycott is to ensure the victory of the Muslim League in the referendum. That necessarily leads to the inclusion of the N.W.F.P. in Pakistan. It becomes part of the new State.

This will not be liked by a very large number of Pathans and they may start movements, nonviolent or violent, against the new State. But it will be no easy matter to get the Frontier out of Pakistan once it is definitely attached to it.

Normally, therefore, a boycott should be ruled out. The other alternative is to take part in the referendum. Badshah Khan appears to be of opinion that in present circumstances the Muslim League will raise the cry of Hindu domination and exploit Bihar occurrences. The probability is that the Muslim League will win and at the same time the Khudai Khidmatgar movement will weaken or even crack up.

Badshah Khan may or may not be right in his political analysis, but he understands more than any other person the psychology of his people and can represent this correctly. Therefore Badshah Khan's views are of great importance.

What is to be done in these circumstances?

There is no doubt that in case Western Punjab is separated from India, the N.W.F.P. will be completely isolated from India. There will be a barrier between the two. Even if the N.W.F.P. joins the Union, it will have to do so on a basis somewhat different from the other provinces. It will be in a real sense a buffer State. Thus it deserves special treatment. It should have the fullest autonomy and it is possible that the tribal people may join it.

Why should we not declare in a resolution of the Working Committee that the N.W.F.P. should in the circumstances enjoy the fullest freedom, and such help as we would be prepared to offer would depend on the choice of the Frontier's people? Thus we give the right of self-determination to these people. If we do so a vote for the present Constituent Assembly would mean a vote for self-determination and freedom. It is on this basis that people may be asked to vote. This will recognize the urge for Pathanistan and yet afford an opportunity to vote in the referendum. Propaganda can be carried on on this basis.

A resolution is suggested for the Working Committee to pass. This will facilitate the approach to the referendum.

4. To Eric Mieville<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
15 June 1947

Dear Sir Eric,

I have your letter of the 15th June. I am afraid I cannot send you any notes for a manifesto for the proposed referendum in the N.W.F.P.<sup>2</sup> This is a matter to be decided by the Frontier people themselves. I cannot even tell you at present what their general attitude is likely to be in regard to this referendum. We have got Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan here as well as one of the Ministers of the Frontier Government. We are conferring with them tomorrow in order to discuss this matter. I might mention that Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan has been specially authorised by the Congress Party in the legislature of the Province as well as by the larger body to decide on a policy to be pursued.<sup>3</sup>

2. There are some matters in connection with the proposed referendum which have been brought to our notice specially. There is the general question of a vast number of refugees who are voters. These run into tens of thousands. Most of them live in big camps at Patiala, Haridwar, Alwar and some other places. How are they to vote? Then I have been given first-hand information by reliable persons of propaganda being carried on by the adherents of the Muslim League in the Frontier Province to the effect that no refugee should return for the purpose of voting, and if he does so, it will be at his peril. Indeed it has been said that no Hindu or Sikh should vote in the referendum, or else there will be a repetition of what happened in Hazara and D.I. Khan and elsewhere. These happenings, as you will remember, were of the most horrible and brutal kind. This kind of thing was being said openly in Bannu town and in one or two other places.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. JN Collection

2. Nehru had been asked to send a brief note setting out the general framework of his policy as regards the holding of the referendum in the North West Frontier Province to help Mieville to comply with the Viceroy's instructions to prepare a manifesto on the subject

3. The joint meeting of the Frontier Provincial Congress Committee, the Congress Parliamentary Party and the Red Shirt Commanders, convened on 12 June at Peshawar, resolved after long deliberations to authorise Abdul Ghaffar Khan to take whatever action he thought best on the question of the referendum. This decision was endorsed by the Congress Working Committee at its meeting on 16 June 1947 at New Delhi.

## 5. Mountbatten's Note on Interview with Nehru<sup>1</sup>

I showed him the article in the *Indian News Chronicle* of the 23rd June, in which he was reported to have made the following<sup>2</sup> statements at Haridwar:—

1. The Frontier Congress will, in all probability, decide to boycott the proposed referendum.
2. In the event of a one-sided referendum, the present Ministry will resign and fight elections afresh on the issue of Pakistan *versus* Free Pathanistan.
3. Whatever may be the immediate future of the Province, the freedom-loving Pathans will continue their struggle for an independent Pathan State.

I told him that Mr. Jinnah had last night protested to me about this, on the ground that statement No. 2 was a highly improper remark to make coming from a leader of Congress who had accepted that there should be no alternative for the N.W.F.P. except to join Hindustan or Pakistan.

Pandit Nehru defended himself by saying that he had made no statement to the press, nor had he seen any pressmen. This statement appeared to have been extracted by a reporter from refugees with whom he had been in conversation, and did not represent either what he said or his views. I told him I would inform Mr. Jinnah accordingly.

2. I told him that Mr. Mandal<sup>2</sup> had asked permission to address the Scheduled Castes in Sylhet on the subject of the referendum, and asked him if he had any objection. He shrugged his shoulders and said he did not mind particularly, but asked, while we were on the subject of Sylhet, why the Reforms Commissioner had excluded the labourers from

1. New Delhi, 24 June 1947. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 591-593.
2. Jogendra Nath Mandal (1906-1969); elected member, Bengal Legislative Assembly, 1937; elected President, First Provincial Conference of the Scheduled Castes Federation, April 1945, Minister, Bengal Government, 1946, League's nominee in the Interim Government, October 1946-July 1947; elected member of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly and became its first President in August 1947, Minister, Law and Labour, Pakistan Government, August 1947-October 1950.

taking part in the referendum.<sup>3</sup> I sent for Mr. V.P. Menon, who explained the reasons to Pandit Nehru, and they arranged to meet subsequently to go into the matter further.

3. I gave him my painting of a proposed flag for the Dominion of India which I had designed. This consisted of a Congress flag with a small Union Jack in the upper canton. Since the Congress flag consists of three horizontal stripes, the Union Jack had been fitted into the exact width of the space between the stripes, which made the Jack one sixth of the total area of the flag instead of one quarter as in the case of Australia, etc.

He took the flag away with him and said he would follow the matter up and let me know.

4. I told him that Mr. Jinnah had asked me for advice as to where he should assemble the Pakistan Assembly. I said that I had strongly recommended that it should be in Delhi in the first instance so that they could obtain the benefit of close contact with the Indian Constituent Assembly.

Pandit Nehru said that he thought that there were a lot of advantages in this if accommodation difficulties could be overcome. I suggested that the Pakistan Constituent Assembly might use the Legislative Assembly Chamber since this was not being used by the Indian Legislature. He promised to follow the matter up and let me know.

5. Finally, we talked about Kashmir. I told him I had arranged with the Maharajah to have a long talk with him on the last day (Sunday)—first an hour or so alone with him after luncheon, and then an hour or so with him and his Prime Minister after dinner. Unfortunately His Highness had been indisposed and had had to take to his bed, and so the conversation could not take place.

Pandit Nehru said that that was an old trick, which the Maharajah had played on him when he was going to meet him in Kashmir—he had on that occasion also had “a tummy ache”

I remarked that I did not think the colic was feigned, and that in any case I had managed to have a certain amount of conversation both with

3. In Sylhet, as Muslims formed 54.27 per cent of the total electoral roll, Liaquat Ali suggested that the number of Muslim voters should be multiplied by a factor which would equate the voting strength of the Muslims with their popular strength. The Congress, on the other hand, claimed that the voters in the Labour and the Commerce and Trade constituencies of the district should be allowed to participate in the referendum.

the Maharajah and Mr. Kak, the Prime Minister, though not together. The advice I had given to both of them independently was:

(a) That Kashmir should not decide about joining any Constituent Assembly—till the Pakistan Constituent Assembly had been set up and the situation before them was a bit clearer.

(b) That meanwhile they should make no statement about independence or about their intentions.

(c) That they should go ahead and enter into "standstill" and other agreements with both new States.

(d) That eventually they should send representatives to one Constituent Assembly and join one of the two States, at least for defence, communications and external affairs.

(e) That so far as possible they should consult the will of the people and do what the majority thought was best for their State.

I said that I got the impression that the Maharajah and the Prime Minister had separately agreed that this was sound advice; but both had stated that on account of the balance of population and the geographical position in which they found themselves, any premature decision might have a very serious effect on their internal stability.

Pandit Nehru agreed that my advice was sound and unexceptionable.

6. He then asked me what luck I had about Sheikh Abdullah. I told him that my wife had had an invitation from Begum Sheikh Abdullah to have tea with her at her house, and that she had enclosed a letter from Pandit Nehru urging acceptance. I told him that this letter only arrived on Friday evening and that Sunday was being devoted to an expedition away from Srinagar, and the only spare time on Saturday had been taken up for visits to two hospitals which had not been included in the programme. The only way therefore that the Begum could have been seen, would have been to invite her up to the palace. Thus the Maharajah asked me not to do since he said she was indulging in political propaganda against him and it would be too awkward if she came. Her Excellency had therefore written to the Begum and explained her inability to accept her invitation.

Pandit Nehru said he was sorry that I had been unable to solve the problem of Kashmir, for the problem would not be solved until Sheikh Abdullah was released from prison and the rights of the people were restored. He (Nehru) felt himself called upon to devote himself to this end, and he thought he would soon have to go to Kashmir to take up the cudgels on behalf of his friend and for the freedom of the people.

I replied that both H H. and the Prime Minister had particularly ask-

ed that no Congress or League leaders should come and visit Kashmir until their decision had been announced, since it would gravely add to their troubles if they were to be subjected to political propaganda before a decision had been reached. As this did not appear to deter Pandit Nehru, I then pointed out that he really must look to his duty to the Indian people as a whole. There were four hundred millions in India and only four millions in Kashmir. He would soon be the Prime Minister of an Indian Government, ruling at least two hundred and fifty millions; and I would consider it highly reprehensible of him to desert his most important duties at the Centre to interest himself on behalf of four millions who might very well be going to join Pakistan and have nothing more to do with him. In fact I called upon him as a matter of duty not to go running off to Kashmir until his new Government was firmly in the saddle and could spare his services.

He reluctantly agreed that I was right, and took my advice in very good part.

## 6. To Eric Mievill<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
25 June 1947

Dear Sir Eric,

Thank you for your letter of today's date sending me the draft of a proposed poster in connection with the referendum in the N.W.F.P.<sup>2</sup> The only comment I have to make is that it might be better to make it clear that Dominion Status is for the interim period; it is open to each Dominion to end that status if it so chooses. This may be done in a variety of ways. In the second line after "each having" and before "Dominion" might be added the words "for the present". Or after "the British Commonwealth of Nations" the following words may be added: "With power to end this status later at their choice." Some such words or any others conveying this sense would make the position clearer. I am making this suggestion for the Viceroy to consider.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

2. The poster to be displayed at the polling booths said among other things that the "plan for the partition of British India into two separate States—India and Pakistan—each having Dominion Status within the British Commonwealth of Nations" was announced by HMG on 3 June 1947, and was accepted by the A.I.C.C. and the Council of the Muslim League.



## 7. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

30.6.1947

Dear Bapu,

You must have got the Viceroy's letter inviting you to come at 10 a.m. tomorrow. He has also agreed to allow us to bring Alladi Krishnaswamy, Gopalaswamy and K M. Munshi. I had mentioned these names rather casually in my letter to him as some of the people we would like to consult. I had not mentioned the names of our colleagues in the Cabinet as I took them for granted. Now I have written to him that he should permit me to consult them later and should give me a copy of the draft bill to show them. It is very unfair to leave them out of the picture in this vital matter

I do not know if you can come at 10 tomorrow. This will be inconvenient for you. We are likely to be there for 2 hours or more. If it is more convenient for you, you could come later, say at 11 or after.

I enclose copies of letters I am sending to Badshah Khan and Khan Sahib in a separate envelope.

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal

1 Pyarelal Papers, N M M L

## 8. To Khan Sahib<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
30 June 1947

My dear Khan,

I enclose a copy of a letter I am sending to Badshah Khan.<sup>2</sup> This letter will give you information about the present position. I hope all of you will consider this carefully and not take any action which encourages the autocratic rulers of Afghanistan in their wild designs which can only injure them as well as us. We cannot admit Afghanistan's right to any part of India. I want Badshah Khan and you particularly to fashion your movement so that nothing harmful is said by any of our people. This is no time also to attack British policy as a whole in the world. That policy is a changing one and we must not think of it in static terms. Needless

1. J.N. Collection

2 See the following item.

attacks do us no good and may injure us. Of course this does not mean that we are to refrain from criticising local happenings in the Frontier.

2. Please let me know how things are shaping themselves and what you expect the future to be. How is the new Governor<sup>3</sup> behaving? Is he friendly to you or not? I met him here before he went and he seemed to me a fairly decent sort. But I do not know much about him.

3. What do you intend to do after this one-sided referendum? We are all very much interested in this business and want to help you as far as we can. But as things are happening we cannot do very much. Still you will remember that we shall always do whatever we can to help you and the people of the Frontier. Please send an answer per bearer.

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Lieutenant-General Sir Rob Lockhart was Acting Governor of the N.W.F.P. from 26 June to 13 August 1947.

## 9. To Abdul Ghaffar Khan<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
30 June 1947

My dear Badshah Khan,

We have had no news of you or about the Frontier Province since you left Delhi except what we have read in the newspapers. I shall be grateful to you if you could kindly send us full particulars of what the situation is and what you expect to do in the near future. You can send your letter by the messenger who is taking this letter.

2. A serious situation has arisen in Afghanistan in regard to the Frontier Province. I think I told you that the Afghan radio and press were carrying on a campaign for the separation of the Frontier Province from India with a view, no doubt, to its incorporation in Afghanistan. To begin with this was not apparently official. But lately it has become quite official and various demands are made to us and to the British Government. It is stated in these demands that the people of the Frontier Province are not Indians and the Province has nothing to do with India. It

<sup>1</sup> Pyarelal Papers, N M M.L.

is in effect a part of Afghanistan and, therefore, the people of the Province should be given every opportunity to establish their independence and, if they so choose, to join Afghanistan. The attitude you have taken up in regard to the referendum is partly supported and partly distorted so that Afghanistan's claims can be put forward.<sup>2</sup>

3. I understand this matter has gone so far as to create a great deal of public agitation and the Afghan Government is bent on doing something to further this agitation. The fact is Afghanistan is in a very difficult position at present and is on the brink of economic collapse. Their tribal people are getting out of hand and they are frantically seeking to get a big loan from America. If this loan does not come, they will be in a very bad fix. Probably because of their difficulties, they want to divert their people's attention to some adventure on the Indian frontier. They might encourage their tribes to make an incursion into India and incite the tribal people in India to join them.

4. The situation is thus full of peril and there might be a great deal of trouble on the Frontier. Obviously if there is any kind of invasion of the Frontier from Afghanistan, it will have to be met by force and the army will be employed for the purpose with all its weapons. That will be unfortunate in itself and at the same time it will produce far-reaching consequences in the Frontier Province.

5. The Afghan Government have further asked us to allow them to send a mission immediately to visit Peshawar and Delhi in order to meet the leaders of the Congress and the Muslim League and discuss the points they have raised. We cannot admit the right of any foreign Government to interfere in internal matters of India. That would be a very bad precedent and would give rise to international complications. Of course we are always willing to discuss matters of mutual concern as we have done in the past. Later on if the Afghan Government wants to send some representatives, we shall welcome them. But it is quite another thing for them to interfere in our internal arrangements and make various demands which are not in keeping with India's sovereignty. We are, therefore, informing them that we cannot allow any delegation from them to come to India at this stage.

2. In a statement issued on 24 June 1947 Abdul Ghaffar Khan appealed to all Pathans, who believed in a free Pathan State, not to participate in the referendum.

6. You will appreciate that this is a very serious matter involving not only India's foreign policy but also the peace and future of the Frontier areas. I am, therefore, bringing this to your notice so that you may appreciate the difficulties of the situation and mould your own actions accordingly.

7. One of our difficulties naturally is that the Afghan Government is utilising and exploiting the attitude which you and your colleagues in the Frontier have taken up.<sup>3</sup> They do it, of course, not because they are anxious to see the Frontier free but because of their own designs and because of their internal difficult situation. Vague reports have reached us that some Congress emissary or emissaries have gone from India to Kabul. I know of no such thing. It is possible, however, that some person may have gone from Peshawar to Kabul.

8. When you were here I asked you whether you would like the Pushtu-speaking areas of India to be joined on to Afghanistan. You said that you would strongly disapprove of this because this would mean not freedom but greater slavery than exists even now. Afghanistan is an autocracy and living conditions there are, as you know, very backward. If the Frontier Province was joined on to Afghanistan, it would also sink to that level both politically and economically and there would be great misery and chaos. What you wanted, you told me, was for a free Pathanistan to be created in the sense of having full autonomy within its own area and then joining hands with the rest of India for defence, external affairs, and such like matters. It was obvious that a small Pathan area in the Frontier Province could not look after defence or external affairs; nor could it have a high standard of living and development without help. Further you told me that you were entirely opposed to the Frontier Province joining Pakistan. You couldn't work with them.

9. Anyway the position is this, as I understand it, that you do not wish to encourage in any way the desire of the Afghan Government to spread out and absorb the Frontier areas. We have been informing the Afghan Government that we cannot accept their argument about a change of the

3 Inviting Muslim Leaguers in NWFP to sit with him to draft a constitution for Pathanistan, Abdul Ghaffar Khan said on 22 June 1947 that he was willing to come to a compromise on the basis of a free Pathan State. Qazi Ataulah, Revenue Minister, said "The Pathans do not want to join Hindustan. Their goal is a free Pathan State for which they fought the mighty power of British Imperialism." On 27 June, Khan Sahib declared at a press conference that Free Pathan State was the only alternative.

frontier line, nor can we agree to their interfering in any way in India's domestic affairs. Any weakening on this issue would create enormous complications. Of course, there is a possibility of the Afghan Government creating trouble for us at the Frontier. If so we shall have to face it.

10. As perhaps you know, we have been very generous to Afghanistan in supplying large quantities of arms, ammunitions etc. free of cost or at a reduced cost. We have given them free training for their officers and we have gone out of our way to provide foodstuff and cloth for them. All this we have done to gain the goodwill of Afghanistan, and it is very irritating now to find how they react to all this. Obviously the benefits they derive from us will be stopped if they create trouble.

11. I would beg of you to consider all these matters and consult your colleagues about them also. These are highly secret matters and should not be published or publicly referred to. Only a few intimate and reliable persons should be consulted. But the general line should be laid down by you in public if you like without reference as to how this question has arisen. It would be unfortunate if the Afghan Government was encouraged in its foolish adventures because of anything you said or did.

12. I have discussed this matter with Gandhiji and he has suggested my writing to you.

13. There is one other matter I should like to refer to. In a recent speech you are reported to have said that British policy was to create an anti-Soviet base in the Frontier Province.<sup>4</sup> I do not think this is quite correct now though it was so in the past. In any event such statements create international complications and difficulties between various countries. The international situation is a very delicate one all over the world and has to be handled very carefully. It is safer and more desirable not to say anything which needlessly gives rise to trouble. We are all closely following international affairs and British and American and Russian policy, and we try to keep aloof from all Power groups. Any such references, however, lead some Powers to think that we have allied ourselves to a group, and that has unfortunate consequences.

14. This letter has been dictated in some haste and I have been unable

4. In a speech at Peshawar on 27 June 1947 Abdul Ghaffar Khan declared: "the British want to make the N.W.F.P. as a military base against Russia. In this connection the arrival of F.M. Montgomery in India and his meetings with Mr. Jinnah are significant."

to say all that I wished to say. But I think I have said enough to explain to you the delicate position that faces us and to inform you of the answer we have sent to the Afghan Government. I wanted you to have this background of information so that you could prepare yourself for and judge subsequent developments; also so that you might be able to give the correct lead to your people. We have to be careful lest in our dissatisfaction with any policy of the British Government we might do something which is injurious to India as a whole and to the Frontier Province especially. We would then be out of the frying pan into the fire.

15. I wish I could meet you and discuss all these matters with you. But I fear that is not possible now or in the near future. If, however, there is any important matter that you wish to refer to me, I hope you will send a letter by messenger.

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal

## 10. On Propaganda by Afghanistan<sup>1</sup>

The Hon'ble Member for External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations said that about a month ago the press and the radio in Afghanistan had started a campaign giving prominence to Afghanistan's interests in the North West Frontier and the claim was made that Pathans were Afghans rather than Indians and they should have the utmost freedom to decide their own future and should not be debarred, as the proposed referendum would appear to do, from deciding either to form a separate free State or to rejoin their motherland, viz Afghanistan. These claims had later been taken up on an official level with H.M.G. and the Government of India. The Government of India had refuted this irredentist claim of Afghanistan to the area lying between the Durand line and the Indus river, and had pointed out that the issue regarding an independent Pathan State was a matter entirely for the Government of India and the Afghan

<sup>1</sup> Remarks at a Cabinet meeting on 4 July 1947. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, p 878.

Government had no locus-standi. H.M.G.'s Minister at Kabul<sup>2</sup> had mentioned the possibility that the Afghan Government's object might be to divert public attention in Afghanistan from the internal economic situation which was precarious.

- 2 Giles Frederick Squire (1894-1959), joined Indian Civil Service 1920; Minister to Afghanistan, 1943-48, Ambassador to Afghanistan, 1948-49

## 11. To Khan Sahib<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
5th July 1947

My dear Khan,

Thank you for your letter of the 2nd July which you sent in answer to mine. I fully appreciate what you say. I only wish we could help you in your present difficulties. We have difficulties enough here from all quarters, but I realise that for the moment your difficulties are greater than ours. We are anxiously waiting for news of what happens in the Frontier Province during the next few days. Rest assured that our thoughts are with you and such help as we can give is always at your disposal.

As I suggested previously in my letter, if there is any important communication, I hope you will send it to me by messenger.

Please convey my regards to Badshah Khan and your other colleagues

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 J N Papers, N M M L

## 12. Mountbatten's Note on Interview with Nehru<sup>1</sup>

1. I told him that Sir Olaf Caroe had written asking whether Pandit

1 8 July 1947. Lord Mountbatten Papers, Broadlands Archives, Broadlands, Romsey, Hampshire Paragraphs 1 and 4 are printed in *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 12, pp 6-7.

Nehru would agree that Mahbub Ali<sup>2</sup> should be shown a copy of Mr. Justice Clarke's<sup>3</sup> finding, and would further agree that he might be given a copy to keep with his own records. Nehru was very generous about it and said that he had already given personal publicity to this finding and was only too glad that Mahbub should have it.

2. I discussed with him the question of an increase in the strength of the Assam Rifles, and he reminded me that this matter had been raised in Cabinet and the decision had been to send the whole file to the Finance Member where it now was.

3. I mentioned to him the request of the Catholic Bishop of Lucknow<sup>4</sup> to be allowed to bring in a number of Italian priests. He said that two or three months ago he had been approached by (or on behalf of) the Bishop, and that he had given instructions for the E. A. Department to forward the request to the Home Department saying that so far as they were concerned it could be approved.

4. Nehru complained about Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar's gratuitously insulting remarks about India having established diplomatic relations with Soviet Russia.<sup>5</sup> I told him it was my intention to invite Sir C. P. to come and see me in the near future to try and persuade him to join the Dominion of India on the basis of the three subjects of Defence, External Affairs and Communications, which Pandit Nehru had told me at yesterday's interview that the Congress Party were now prepared to accept as a basis of relationship between the Dominion of India and such States. I said I would certainly take up this question with Sir C. P. then. Pandit Nehru said that the basic difficulty with Sir C. P. was that he had a very inflated opinion of his own importance, was always taking offence unless he was played up to, and seemed to want to get into the news gratuitously. I promised to try and get hold of Sir C. P. as soon as I could without making it a matter of urgency.

2 Mahbub Ali, the Political Agent in Malakand, was exonerated of misconduct in failing to prevent an attack by the tribesmen on Nehru and his party on his visit to the North West Frontier Province in October 1946

3 Reginald Clarke, practised at the Rangoon Bar, 1924-41, served in the army in Burma and India, 1942-44; Judge, Madras High Court, 1944-48, Judge of Clerkenwell, Middlesex, 1955-66

4 Sydney Alfred Bill

5 On 6 July 1947, C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar declared: " Travancore cannot be found to join a dominion whose leaders have at this critical juncture in world history established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Republic "





## 1. To Padma Shamsher Jung Bahadur Rana<sup>1</sup>

Dated 14-6-47

My dear Maharaja Sahib,

The Bihar Government propose to increase their military police force to the extent of about 2,000 men and, for this purpose, they would like to take as many Gurkha ex-soldiers as may be available. The Prime Minister of Bihar has approached the Government of India with a request that the necessary permission may be secured from the Nepal Government. The proposal has, I think, certain advantages both for the Bihar Government and for the Gurkha ex-soldiers, and I trust you will be pleased to give your consent to it.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No 4(3)-CA/47, p. 7/corr, National Archives of India

## 2. Interviews with Field Marshal Lord Montgomery<sup>1</sup>

### I

I accompanied the Chief of the Imperial General Staff when he called on Pandit Nehru this afternoon. After exchange of courtesies, in the course of which Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery told Mr. Nehru that he desired to help India in any way possible, the question of Gurkha troops was raised. Viscount Montgomery said that he had been empowered by the Prime Minister to come to an arrangement with Mr. Nehru about the employment of Gurkha troops in the British army, to the extent and on the lines with which the Government of India were familiar, from the conversations which Major General Lyne and I had had with them in March

1. Held on 23 and 24 June 1947. Here are printed two reports—one written by Terence Shone and the other by Nehru. Terence Shone was present at the interviews. Both reports are printed in *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 11 at pp. 617-619 and 721-726 respectively.

and April. Viscount Montgomery made it clear that this was a matter on which an urgent decision was needed; he was making arrangements to place the British army on a peacetime footing and it was essential to know the position as regards the Gurkha battalions which His Majesty's Government wished to employ. There had been a long delay since Sir Girija Bajpai and Major General Lyne had gone to Kathmandu in April together to obtain the consent of the Nepalese Government to the employment of Gurkha troops in both the Indian and the British armies. The British military delegation, which it was proposed should come out to Delhi to make a concerted plan with the Indian military authorities, had been held up, pending the agreement of the Government of India to grant the necessary facilities for the employment of Gurkha troops by His Majesty's Government. Viscount Montgomery was anxious that it should start work as soon as possible, and before the division of the Indian army took place, as that was likely to complicate the preparation of the plan for employing Gurkhas.

2. Mr. Nehru spoke at some length of the difficulties which had arisen over this question both in Delhi, with his colleagues, and with regard to the Nepalese Government, who had been unwilling to define their attitude. He indicated that it was not a matter which he wanted to be raised again in the Cabinet; the Cabinet was tending more and more to work in two parts; presently there would no doubt be changes of personnel. (I fancy that in saying this, he meant to convey his reluctance to commit any future government of the Indian Union. His attitude, while perfectly friendly, was at first unforthcoming; and he did not mention that the visit of Sir G. Bajpai and Major General Lyne to Kathmandu had resulted in a definition of the Nepalese Government's attitude. He did not, however, allude to the report which we have heard Sir G. Bajpai gave him after his return, to the effect that the Nepalese Government would not be averse from the employment of Gurkhas in the Indian army alone; nor did he say that the Indian army would now want to employ all the existing Gurkha battalions, as we had some reason to believe he might.)

3. I interposed at this stage to say that we had understood from Major General Lyne, who had acted in the closest collaboration with Sir G. Bajpai throughout the proceedings in Kathmandu, that the Maharaja of Nepal had made a very definite statement regarding the attitude of his Government, and that he would welcome the proposals for employing Gurkha troops in both armies, if agreement were reached between the Government of India and His Majesty's Government. We had taken particular care to act in the closest collaboration with the Government of

India in our approach to the Nepalese Government, and we were now desirous of coming to an agreement with the Indian authorities without further delay.

4. Viscount Montgomery made it clear that he did not wish the matter to be decided by the Indian Cabinet if that presented difficulty; he would be satisfied if he could obtain a satisfactory assurance from Pandit Nehru. He pressed Pandit Nehru to give this assurance before he left Delhi, in order that he might be able to inform the Prime Minister.

5. Pandit Nehru, whose attitude became rather more forthcoming towards the end of the conversation, said he must consult some of his colleagues. Viscount Montgomery urged Pandit Nehru to do this without delay and said he would be glad to call on Pandit Nehru at any time or place convenient to him tomorrow, to hear his answer.

6. I told Pandit Nehru that Viscount Montgomery was lunching with me tomorrow and that I hoped he would come too and would be able to give us an answer by then. Pandit Nehru accepted the invitation but did not promise a reply by then.

7. Viscount Montgomery then raised the question of British troops in India. Was it correct that Pandit Nehru wished them to be withdrawn on the transfer of power, on 15th August? Pandit Nehru replied in the affirmative. Viscount Montgomery said that after the transfer of power, British troops would be in India merely as sojourners; it would not be possible to withdraw them all at once; the plan he had been working on was for complete withdrawal by June, 1948, but he wished to get the British troops out as soon as possible and the plan could be speeded up to make withdrawal complete by the end of February, 1948. Pandit Nehru agreed. Viscount Montgomery said it was important for him to know whether there was any likelihood of the Government of the Indian Union changing their minds and asking for British troops to remain. Pandit Nehru said "we shall not ask you to stay".

8. It was pointed out to Pandit Nehru that the forthcoming withdrawal of British troops was an additional reason for reaching an early agreement about the employment of Gurkhas.

9. The conversation then turned to the arrangements for the division of the Indian army, in regard to which Pandit Nehru's ideas seemed to be rather nebulous and impractical.

10. Before we took our leave, there was some general talk about conditions in India with particular reference to the division of the country. Viscount Montgomery congratulated Pandit Nehru on the fact that the Indian leaders had reached agreement. Pandit Nehru spoke of the great amount of work to be done in connexion with the division of India, and of the relative poverty of Pakistan, industrially, as compared with the Indian Union. But Pakistan would possess many of the most productive food-growing areas, which showed how necessary it was for the two parts of India to have good relations. He also alluded to the French and Portuguese colonies in India which, he said, would inevitably come into the Indian Union sooner or later. He spoke of M. Baron's<sup>2</sup> "strange" proposal that France should continue to exercise some sort of cultural control in the French colonies; and he said that the Portuguese title to Goa derived from a Papal Bull. The Government of India had made an approach to the Vatican on this through the Catholic Primate in India. The Vatican, it appeared, were more concerned with the maintenance of their religious institutions throughout India than with the question of Goa itself.

## II

Field Marshal Montgomery came to see me yesterday, accompanied by the U.K. High Commissioner Sir Terence Shone. He told me that as head of the British army he was arranging for the complete withdrawal of British troops from India. He intended beginning this process on the 15th August. He wanted to do so as rapidly as possible, but there were shipping and other difficulties which would delay the process. In any event, he said that the end of February 1948 was the final date for the withdrawal of the last soldier of the British army from India.

2. He asked me if I was agreeable to this withdrawal. I said I was entirely agreeable to the withdrawal as soon as possible. I could not fix any definite date, as this would depend on various facilities. A few weeks this way or that way would not matter, but I hoped that the withdrawal would be speedy and complete.

3. He asked me if there was any chance of our changing our minds later and asking some British troops to be left in India. If this happened it would upset his programme. I told him that there was not the least chance of this happening and we wanted British troops in India to be taken away completely.

<sup>2</sup> Governor of the French territories in India.

4. He then spoke to me about the British proposal about taking Gurkha troops in the British army. This, of course, had been discussed previously with Major General Lyne, who came here some months back. It had been before the Cabinet on two or three occasions and it was in this connection that Sir Girija Shankar Bajpai and Brigadier Rudra had visited Kathmandu, on behalf of the Government of India.

5. The position was that the Government of India had agreed to the inclusion of Gurkha battalions—probably eight in number—in the Indian army, on the express understanding that they would be officered by Indian officers or possibly Gurkha officers. This had been agreed to on behalf of the Nepalese Government informally.

6. As regards the employment of Gurkha troops in the British army, no decision had so far been reached, though some light had been thrown on the attitude of the Nepalese Government by the visit of Sir Girija Shankar Bajpai and Brigadier Rudra to Nepal.

7. Field Marshal Montgomery pointed out that the British Government were very anxious for a decision in principle of this matter and their plans were hung up because of this. Also, in view of the division of the Indian army which was now taking place, it might be difficult to tackle this question at a later stage when facilities for doing so might not be forthcoming. Therefore, a quick decision by us was necessary. That decision need be only of the principle involved and not of any details. He did not want any formal decision either of the Cabinet. He is satisfied if I could give the assurance and he would communicate it to his Prime Minister and go ahead with the proposal. This meant that some representatives of the British War Office would visit India in the near future and discuss the matter more fully with representatives of the Government of India or our Defence Department. Later the two could go to Kathmandu for final discussions and decisions.

8. I told the Field Marshal that while we were anxious to meet the wishes of H.M.G., there were considerable difficulties in our way and many questions of principle were involved. I could not possibly, therefore, give him any answer at that stage committing our Government. Indeed, it was impossible for me to commit the future Dominion Government of India as that has not been formed. This did not seem to worry the Field Marshal and he said that my own assurance was quite enough for him. Ultimately, I said that I would consider the matter further, consult some of my colleagues and give him our reactions the next day, that is today.

9. Having consulted a number of my colleagues this morning, I met the Field Marshal this afternoon Sir Terence Shone was also present. I told him that Gurkha troops especially, and, to some extent the whole Indian army, had become unpopular because of their use for imperial purposes by the British Government in the past. A year ago Gurkha troops came into conflict with Indonesians and there was much resentment in Indonesia against Gurkhas.<sup>3</sup> Anything that we might do and which might lead to a continuation of the old tradition of employment of Gurkha troops for imperial purposes would be subject to adverse comment in India. While the present was no doubt different from the past and the future was likely to be still more different, it was the past that had produced the present psychological approach of our people. They would judge every action by their past and any hang-over from the past would be objected to. It would be looked upon as a continuation of the old imperialist method of holding down colonial territories. It might also appear as a continuation of the imperialist link with India. We were entirely opposed to any such thing, and would object strongly to the use of any troops, much more Gurkha troops, against any people struggling for their freedom. "What were the Gurkha troops required for?" I asked.

10. The Field Marshal said that they were required as a reserve for emergencies and to carry out the British commitments in the Far East. These troops were not to be used locally and certainly not against any people's movement for freedom. They were not to be used at all in fact, unless war came. Malaya was a suitable place for them to be stationed; otherwise, they had nothing to do with Malaya. He told me how Gurkhas had been misjudged in Indonesia, as they really helped in keeping the peace and preventing grave developments. So also in Syria, Sir Terence Shone added, where the Gurkhas became very popular with the people.

11. I said that we could not come in the way of any arrangement between the U.K. and Nepal, as Nepal was an independent country; but, owing to the geographical situation of Nepal, surrounded as it was by India, certain facilities were required of us. What were these facilities? He said, in the main, they required transit facilities, not for troops as such, but for individuals or groups of Gurkhas travelling as civilians across India. There might also be some facilities for transfer of moneys from the Gurkha soldiers to their country. Apart from this, practically

3 On 29 September 1945, Indian troops, including the Gurkhas, had landed in Indonesia to suppress the nationalist movement at Surabaya and there had been fierce fighting between the Gurkhas and the Indonesians.

nothing more was required of us at a later stage. To begin with, of course, there would have to be some kind of a division of the present Gurkha battalions in India. They did not propose to have any training or big recruiting centres in Nepal. At the most, they would have some recruiting agents in Nepal for replacements in the future. Training would take place where the battalions were stationed normally. As soon as these battalions were separated from the Indian army, they will be taken away to Malaya and lodged there. Immediately arrangements will be made for them in Malaya.

12. He pointed out the grave man-power difficulty of the U.K. leading to the necessity of their retaining Gurkha troops in South-East Asia for emergencies, notably war. He hoped they would never be used for any other purpose. They naturally turned to the Gurkhas because of their past association with them in the British army. He referred to our taking Gurkhas in the Indian army.

13. I pointed out that though Nepal was an independent country, it was very closely allied to India in culture and tradition and we did not look upon it as a foreign country. It was natural therefore for us to develop the closest bonds with it and I hoped that this would grow closer still in the future. That did not apply to any other country in regard to Nepal, though we recognised the long-standing association of the Gurkhas with the British Indian army.

14. Our talk ranged over many matters and I pointed out to the Field Marshal the psychological background of the problem and how the average Indian must necessarily look upon any such agreement with suspicion and how it might be misunderstood in other countries also, especially of Asia. I then said that it might become a precedent. The British army might think of recruiting troops from the North-West tribal areas, the Afridis, etc., and might come to terms with Pakistan. The Field Marshal said that this was quite out of the question. They never thought of it and they did not propose to think of it. The Gurkhas stood quite apart from others for many reasons and on no account would this be treated as a precedent. Indeed, he was prepared to guarantee that no other arrangement would be arrived at by the British Government in regard to any part of India as a whole without the consent of the Indian Union, or Greater India as he called it. He was quite emphatic that the Gurkha matter could not and must not be treated as a precedent.

15. I suggested to him if it would at all be feasible for all the Gurkha regiments to be formally incorporated in the Indian army and, then



some of them loaned out to the British army. In fact, they will be under the British army, but they would technically belong to the Indian army. He said this was a difficult and complicated matter and probably not feasible. All manner of confusion might arise.

16. I asked him what would be the primary allegiance of a Gurkha soldier serving in the British army. He said that while the soldier would obviously be under the discipline of the British army, his primary allegiance would be to Nepal and nothing could or should be done which might come in the way of that allegiance.

17. Again, I pointed out, the fact that Gurkhas were employed both by India and by the United Kingdom would produce confusion in peoples' minds. The Field Marshal thought that there was no particular reason why all this could not be clarified in subsequent discussions. For the present, he wanted a general assurance of an agreement on principle, so that he could go ahead.

18. I pointed out that the Nepalese Government had, while expressing their willingness to allow Gurkhas to serve both in the Indian and the U.K. army, made it perfectly clear that they must not be regarded as mercenaries and must not be used against each other or against any popular movement<sup>4</sup>. He agreed that this could be clarified later.

19. After a considerable discussion of various aspects of the question, I told him that we felt reluctant to agree to his proposals because of a large number of implications involved, but we were anxious not to put any difficulties in the way of the U.K. or of Nepal, if they wanted to come to an agreement. Therefore, taking everything into consideration, we were prepared to give them the facilities for transit, etc., asked for, subject to further consideration of details and an agreement with the Nepalese Government. He said that that was all he wanted for the present and he could proceed immediately on this assumption. He was going to inform his Prime Minister accordingly and probably in the course

4. At a meeting held at Kathmandu on 1 May 1947 between the representatives of the British Government, the Government of India and the Government of Nepal, the Prime Minister and Supreme Commander-in-Chief of Nepal stated that he would welcome the proposals to maintain the Gurkha connection with the armies of the United Kingdom and India "if the terms and conditions at the final stage do not prove detrimental to the interest or dignity of the Nepalese Government" and "men of the Gurkha regiments are willing so to serve if they will not be looked upon as distinctly mercenary."



AT THE A.I.C.C. SESSION, NEW DELHI 15 JUNE 1947



WITH FIELD MARSHAL LORD MONTGOMERY, NEW DELHI, 23 JUNE 1947

of ten days or so a small commission of two or three persons might come to India from the British War Office to discuss this matter further. He hoped that these discussions will be carried out quietly without much fuss and later the venue would be transferred to Kathmandu. I said that we were frightfully busy at present with this partition and division of the army, etc, and it might be better to postpone this for a while. He said that we were not likely to be less busy later on and when the British army and the British element in the Indian army were leaving India it would be more difficult. Therefore, it is better to do it as soon as possible in a quiet way without any fuss.

20 I told him that we had considered this question in isolation from the other problems that might arise in regard to the relations of India with Britain, though, of course, it was a part of those problems. Possibly, this may be incorporated in any future settlement or kept apart, as might be the better course. Further, I again made it clear to him that it was beyond my power or authority to commit the future Dominion Government to any course of action.

21. He said that he thoroughly appreciated this, but he was quite content with my personal assurance. Indeed, he did not want a written reply even and an oral answer was enough for him to proceed. He expressed his gratitude for our agreeing to give the transit facilities the U.K. Government had asked for.

22. There the conversation ended. Presumably, some representatives of the War Office are likely to come to India soon to pursue this matter further. They are not likely to be any very senior officers. The Field Marshal said that he would send a colonel and one or two others.

23. Field Marshal Montgomery told me that in case we required his services in any way in future he would be glad to come to India to advise us, but, of course, he would only come if invited by us, and not otherwise.

### 3. To Field Marshal Lord Montgomery<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
24th June 1947

My dear Field Marshal,

Thank you for your letter of the 24th June which I have just received.<sup>2</sup> As I told you, we have approached this question with every desire to meet the wishes of the British Government. We have our difficulties and we do not wish to do anything which might perhaps add to them in future. I am glad, however, that in this matter there has been agreement in principle as you have informed the Prime Minister of Great Britain. The details will have to be worked out in consultation with representatives of the War Office.

2. It has been a great pleasure to meet you. I have long been looking forward to doing so. I should have liked to have had occasions to see more of you, but I hope that the future may bring additional meetings.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, pp 609-610.

2. In his letter of 24 June 1947, Montgomery mentioned that as desired by Attlee he came to an arrangement with Nehru concerning the grant of facilities for the employment of Gurkha troops in British India. He had telegraphed to the War Office to send a mission to India to settle the details and then to proceed to Nepal with Nehru's mission to get the agreement of the Nepalese Government.

### 4. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

5th July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

You mentioned to me some names for the post of Commander-in-Chief of the army of the Indian Union. At that time I expressed my prefer-

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 11, p 911

ence for General Slim.<sup>2</sup> I have now consulted some of my colleagues also and they would very much like General Slim to assume this charge. I am writing this to you in some haste as perhaps you might like to mention this to General Ismay before his departure for London.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. Field Marshal William Joseph, first Viscount Slim (1891-1970); joined 6th Gurkha Rifles, Indian Army, commanded Fourteenth Army in Burma in the Second World War, Commander-in-chief, Allied land forces, South East Asia, 1945-46; Chief of Imperial General Staff, 1948-52, Governor-General of Australia, 1953-60

## 5. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
11th July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Sardar Baldev Singh has just shown me your letter to him, dated the 11th July, and the draft of the statement you propose to issue asking the British personnel to stay on for the interim period during the reconstitution of the armed forces.<sup>2</sup>

You know that we attach the greatest importance to the rapid nationalisation of the defence services. It was our original plan that this should be completed by June 1948. The partition activities have come in the way, but, nevertheless, I trust that nationalisation will be pushed on as rapidly as possible. It is incongruous for the army of a free country not to have its own officers in the highest ranks. As soon as India becomes a Dominion the control of the army naturally fully rests with the Dominion Government. I take it that this is clear; but some confusion has arisen owing to the process of division going on. This process will not, I presume, lessen in any degree the control of the army by the Dominion Government as well as the rapid Indianisation of the army.

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 12, pp 105-106

2. Mountbatten's draft was based on the fear that there was a serious risk of a breakdown of administration if large numbers of trained officers were suddenly withdrawn. He issued the appeal with the approval of Nehru and Jinnah

I entirely agree with you that during the interim period the services of the British officers and technical specialists will be required. We shall welcome them. But I trust that when this interim period is over, and the date fixed for it is the 31st March 1948, the number required will be greatly reduced. A sentence in your statement about large numbers of British personnel volunteering might give rise to the impression that we are continuing a very large number of British officers rather indefinitely. This would be unfortunate and will be criticised.

I am anxious that senior Indian officers should be associated immediately with work at the topmost level. I am rather surprised that no promotions have been made among them during the last few months, although that was the recommendation of the Nationalisation Committee.<sup>3</sup> I do not suppose that promotion would have come in the way of partition. It is not merely a question of promotion but of association at high levels.

I should have liked the Armed Forces Reorganisation Committee<sup>4</sup> also to have senior Indian officers associated with it. This seems to me not only psychologically but also practically necessary. They will have to assume responsibility soon and the sooner they begin to discharge it the better.

I am told that a number of senior officers and others employed in the Defence Department have opted for service in Pakistan. Those who have done so should not serve in any committee for partition, except as representatives of Pakistan. Indeed, I would suggest that the time has come for all persons who have opted for Pakistan to transfer their services forthwith to working for Pakistan. It is incongruous and it will lead to difficulties if they continue to serve in our present departments.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

- 3 The Armed Forces Nationalisation Committee was set up in November 1946 to suggest ways and means of speedy nationalisation of the armed forces. Gopalaswamy Ayyangar was its chairman and H.N. Kunzru, Mohammad Ismail, Sampuran Singh, three senior Indian officers and a senior British officer members.
- 4 On 30 June 1947 the Partition Council set up an Armed Forces Reconstitution Committee "to make proposals for the division of the existing armed forces of India", including the various installations, establishments and stores owned by the Defence Department of the Government of India. The Committee consisted of Field Marshal Claude Auchinleck, Chairman, Vice-Admiral Geoffrey Miles; Air Marshal H.S.P. Walmsley, Lt. General Arthur F. Smith, Mohammad Ali, Financial Adviser, War and Supply, Military Finance Department, G.S. Bhalja, Additional Secretary, Defence Department, Colonel H.V.S. Muller, Secretary.

## 6. Arthur Smith's Note on Interview with Nehru<sup>1</sup>

1. Pandit Nehru did not seem to understand the sequence of events regarding the progress of nationalisation. He had forgotten that the Indian Cabinet, some weeks ago, agreed that rapid nationalisation to effect completion by June 48, should be stopped, and that we should revert to the normal rate of nationalisation. I explained to him that it was quite impossible both to reconstitute the Armed Forces and to proceed with rapid nationalisation at the same time.

Pandit Nehru insisted that Indian officers should be promoted to the highest ranks. I explained to him the need for centralised control regarding promotion and moves, and that this was a matter which he should discuss with the Commander-in-Chief designate of (the Union of) India, and that it would be necessary to balance up the national demands to have Indian Generals, with the practical necessity of having senior British officers in the most responsible posts during the early stages of reconstitution.

2. Out of this discussion emerged the fact that Pandit Nehru did not appear fully to have grasped that operational control of the Army in (the Union of) India would be the responsibility of the Dominion Governments and not of the Supreme Commander after August 15th. He referred to possible trouble in Calcutta, and I explained to him the system of command that would obtain there after the 15th August.

Following this, I outlined to him the practical difficulty that might arise should disorder break out after 15 August on the frontier between Hindustan and Pakistan, and told him that a proposal had been submitted to the Viceroy whereby the Joint Defence Council,<sup>2</sup> on behalf of the two Dominion Governments, should ask the Supreme Commander

1. 13 July 1947. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 12, pp. 129-130.

Arthur Francis Smith (1890-1977); served European War, 1914-18, Brigadier, General Staff, British troops in Egypt, 1938-39, G O C-in-C, Persia and Iraq Command, 1944-45; G O C-in-C, Eastern Command, India, 1945-46, Chief of General Staff, India, 1946, Deputy C-in-C, 1947, Commander, British Forces in India and Pakistan, November 1947, retired 1948

2. On 30 June 1947, a Joint Defence Council was set up so that the existing armed forces in India would be under a single administrative control until they had been divided into two distinct forces, and the two Governments were in a position to administer their respective forces. Its members were the Governor-General, the two Defence Ministers, and the Commander-in-Chief of India who was to hold administrative charge under the Council. From 15 August 1947, the Commander-in-Chief was to be designated the Supreme Commander. He was to have no operational control over any units



to appoint a senior British officer and adequate staff to take control of any "disturbed area." In such event operational control would have to be exercised by the Supreme Commander on behalf of the Joint Defence Council. Pandit Nehru seemed to think that such an arrangement would be temporarily necessary.

3. We discussed the retention of British officers and technical specialists, and I emphasised that, from reports received, it seemed unlikely that British personnel would be willing to volunteer. I explained the reasons for this, and Pandit Nehru expressed the view that attacks on British officers in the press had lessened considerably of late. I told him it was not just a question of public attacks in the press, but of other pin pricks which British officers suffered (I had in mind the recent accusation by H.M.D. of certain senior officers at G.H.Q. in connection with the issue of arms to States Forces and Police, but I did not mention that H.M.D.'s attitude was a case in point). I told Pandit Nehru that, undoubtedly, British officers would take a statement from Indian leaders themselves of their indebtedness to the British officers and their hope that they will continue to assist during the early period of reconstitution

4. I referred to Pandit Nehru's statement that he would have "liked the Armed Forces Reorganisation Committee also to have senior Indian officers associated with it"

I explained that, while the main A.F.R. Committee had no Indian officers on it, there was a representative of both (the Union of) India and Pakistan: that this had been agreed by the Partition Council,<sup>3</sup> and if they had wanted Indian officers on this Committee, they should have said so earlier. I added, however, that the detailed work concerning reconstitution lay with the Sub-Committees, and explained that, in the case of the Army Sub-Committee, there were six Indian officers as against four British. I also emphasised that, whereas the main work of the present G.H.Q. was to "break down" the Army, the main responsibility for "building up" the new armies would rest with the Commanders-in-Chief of the two Dominions. It was, therefore, sound gradually to make the diminishing G.H.Q. consist mostly of British ex-officers so that more Indian officers would be available for administrative and command posts in the armies of (the Union of) India and Pakistan

3 The Partition Council came into existence on 27 June 1947, with the Viceroy as the Chairman. Its members were Vallabhbhai Patel and Rajendra Prasad from the Congress, Liaquat Ali Khan and M.A. Jinnah from the Muslim League. The Partition Council worked through a Steering Committee of two senior officials, H.M. Patel and Mohammed Ali

5. With reference to Pandit Nehru's statement that a number of senior officers and others employed in the Defence Department have opted for service in Pakistan, I pointed out this was not true as regards officers of the Armed Forces as no replies had yet been received from Indian officers stating whether they wished to serve (the Union of) India or Pakistan.

6. The interview started rather stickily, but as confidence was gained our conversation became extremely easy. The interview lasted over an hour and ended in the most friendly way, and, I hope, helped to reassure Pandit Nehru that every action being taken in regard to reconstitution was being done on sound lines and with complete integrity of purpose.

## 7. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
July 14, 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Please forgive me for the delay in answering your letter No. 38/18 of the 11th July.<sup>2</sup>

I am sorry that General Slim has found himself unable to accept our invitation to become Commander-in-Chief, India. In the circumstances, I agree with you that the best man will be General Lockhart. I have consulted Sardar Baldev Singh and my other colleagues also.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

<sup>1</sup> J.N. Collection

<sup>2</sup> In his letter of 11 July, Mountbatten said that the Secretary of State had cabled that Slim had declined the invitation to become Commander-in-Chief of India and Lockhart would be the next best man for that post

## 8. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
July 14, 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Thank you for your letter of today's date which I have just received <sup>2</sup>

I have already written to you separately about Lockhart. I agree with you that he should be the Commander-in-Chief of the Army of India. I hardly think it is necessary to trouble him to come to Delhi to enable us to decide this.

I feel rather at sea about your other proposals.<sup>3</sup> You know far more about this business than I do and the obvious course is for me to accept your advice. I should like, however, to consult Sardar Baldev Singh and other colleagues before sending you my final answer

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection

2. In his letter of 14 July Mountbatten suggested that Lockhart could be called to Delhi from the North West Frontier Province (where he was the Governor) to discuss the matter with Nehru

3. In the same letter Mountbatten recommended the names of Hall and Shewring for the post of Flag Officer of the Royal Indian Navy with their necessary particulars. He also proposed to change that rank into that of Rear Admiral. He further proposed Chakravarti's name for the post of Chief of Staff, Navy. He recommended Mukherji's name as Chief of Staff, R.I.A.F.

## 9 To Baldev Singh<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
July 14, 1947

My dear Baldev Singh,

Thank you for your letter of July 14. There is much substance in what you say about the Gurkha battalions. But in view of the considerable extra cost involved in maintaining all of them, I think we should consider the matter at an informal meeting of our colleagues at an early date.

1. J.N. Collection.

I enclose a copy of a letter received from the Viceroy. I am afraid it is impossible for me to give any opinion in regard to the various appointments referred to in this letter. I should like you to consult your advisers in the different services and then let me have your opinion. Kindly do this as early as possible.

I have informed the Viceroy that we approve of Lockhart's appointment as Commander-in-Chief, India

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

#### 10. To Baldev Singh<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
19 July 1947

My dear Baldev Singh,

I have your letter of the 18th July<sup>2</sup> I agree with you that the Defence Department must be maintained at the highest level of efficiency now and later. I think, however, that you might wait for about two weeks or so for the report of an I.C.S. manpower committee which Sardar Patel has appointed. This committee has been asked to report by the end of this month. Government is terribly short of trained manpower and I have in fact stopped sending abroad even chosen candidates for the Foreign Service. Probably early in August we shall be in a better position to judge.

2 For the present I suggest that Bhalja might take charge immediately, of the post of Secretary of the Defence Department, and you might appoint S.K. Kripalani as Joint Secretary. As regards P.N. Thapar<sup>3</sup> we had better wait for some little time before finally making up our minds. I take it that in any event he will join our service here and we can utilise him to the best advantage after we know the exact position.

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. In his letter of 18 July, Baldev Singh suggested that to maintain the efficiency of the Defence Department new problems arising during the period of re-constitution should be tackled immediately and necessary appointments made

3. (1903-1982), joined the Indian Civil Service 1927; served in the Punjab, Secretary, Food and Agriculture Ministry, Government of India, 1954-58

3. Bhalja may not be the ideal Secretary, but he has a certain amount of experience, and that is important at the present moment. A new man would take some time to get that experience

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 11. Symon's Report on Interview with Nehru<sup>1</sup>

I took the opportunity during my discussion today with Mr. Nehru to ask him whether, now that a new Government had been formed, steps could be taken to finalise the understanding which he had reached with Field Marshal Montgomery regarding the employment of Gurkhas by His Majesty's Government.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Nehru seemed surprised and said that he did not understand what more was required. The position was that at the time of the Field Marshal's visit he had consulted his colleagues and had subsequently brought the subject up in Cabinet. No objection had been raised and therefore I could assume that the matter was settled so far as the Government of India were concerned

He then went on to say that of the present 27 Gurkha battalions the intention was to retain 12 of the 20 pre-war battalions for the Indian army leaving the other 8 pre-war battalions for His Majesty's Government. They did not, however, propose immediately to disband the other 7 battalions for the time being. They would probably be kept, say, until March of next year.

I told Mr. Nehru that Colonel Smith<sup>3</sup> had arrived from the War Office to arrange details with Army Headquarters here and I asked him whether

1 21 July 1947. R/3/1/147, I O L R, London  
Alexander Colin Burlington Symon (1902-1974), appointed to India Office, 1921; Secretary to Indian Delegation to London Naval Conference, 1935; Secretary to Indian Supply Mission in U.S.A., 1941-46; Deputy High Commissioner for the United Kingdom in India, 1946-49, Assistant Under-Secretary of State, Commonwealth Relations Office, 1949-52; British High Commissioner in Pakistan, 1954-61

2 See *ante*, item 2

3 Colonel D M W. Smith had arrived in New Delhi in July 1947 from the War Office as head of a mission to assist the High Commissioner of the United Kingdom to complete negotiations with the Governments of India and Nepal for the purpose of transfer of Gurkha troops to H.M.G.

I could assume that, when the details had been arranged, the way would be clear for the British Mission to proceed to Kathmandu to negotiate a formal agreement with the Nepal Government. He said that this was the case though he thought that it might be a good thing to send someone from the Government of India with our Mission because there were political problems connected with the agreement. By this he meant the reservations which the Maharajah of Nepal had made as regards the actual use of Gurkha troops by His Majesty's Government and, of course, by the Government of India.

I told him that when Colonel Smith's Mission completed its work we would consult with External Affairs Department before arrangements were made for the Mission to proceed to Kathmandu.

## 12. To Baldev Singh<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
25 July 1947

My dear Baldev Singh,

At the suggestion of the Viceroy I met Air Marshal Elmhurst<sup>2</sup> and Captain Hall.<sup>3</sup> You had already selected Captain Hall and so there was not much to be said about it.<sup>4</sup> Elmhurst's appointment has been proposed by you. I have met him a few times and I have been considerably impressed by him. He is a man of long and varied experience especially in organising air forces. Also he appeared to me to have the right slant on India. I have known his brother for many years. I thought we had better finally fix up Elmhurst without waiting for new names to consider

2. Elmhurst told me that he had put forward one condition to the

1 J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.

2 Thomas Walker Elmhurst (1895-1982), Second in Command, British Air Forces in North-Western Europe, 1944-45, Assistant Chief of Air Staff (Intelligence), 1945-47; Chief of Inter-Service Administration in India, 1947; First Commander-in-Chief, Indian Air Force, 1947-50, Honorary Air Marshal in the Indian Air Force, 1950.

3 John Talbot Savignac Hall (1896-1964), Acting Rear-Admiral, 1947, Flag Officer Commanding (later Commander-in-Chief), Royal Indian Navy, 1947-48. Rear-Admiral, 1950.

4 In his letter of 20 July 1947 Baldev Singh had recommended Hall's name for the post of Commander-in-Chief, Indian Navy, Nott's name for some responsible post in the Navy and Elmhurst's name for the post of Commander-in-Chief, Indian Air Force.

Viceroy, namely that he must not be subordinate to the Commander-in-Chief of the land forces. He said that the Indian Air Force had suffered greatly in the past by being made a subordinate wing of the Army. The only way to develop it was to give it an independent status. This, in fact, was being done in other countries. He was anxious to help in building up the Indian Air Force rapidly and efficiently and he did not want the military to come in the way. I entirely agreed with him and told him that so far as I was concerned I gladly accepted his condition. The more I see Elmhirst, the more I like him. I think he will do good work for us. He was on the point of going back to England when this offer was made to him. He will now stay on.

3. I mentioned both to the Viceroy and Captain Hall that we would like to keep Captain Nott<sup>5</sup> on in the Indian Navy in addition to Hall. Nott is at present running the training school at Cochin. The Viceroy knows him personally and speaks highly of him. I think he will stay on here.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

5 M H Nott, Chief of Naval Staff, India, 1947-48.

### 13. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
26 July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I have been following from a distance some of the proceedings of the Partition Council. I have, in particular, seen some of the papers relating to the partition of the Army and the future reorganisation of the Defence Forces. The approach made by the Commander-in-Chief in regard to certain matters seems to me very different from our approach.

On reading yesterday some correspondence which has passed between Mr. Rajagopalachari and the Commander-in-Chief regarding the Financial Adviser,<sup>2</sup> War and Supply, I was surprised to find that the Com-

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 12, pp 365-367.

2 Chaudhury Mohammad Ali (1905-1980), joined Indian Audit and Accounts service 1928, Accountant-General of Bahawalpur State, 1932; joined Finance Department, Government of India, 1936 and became Financial Adviser, Department of War and Supply, 1945, in Pakistan, Secretary-General of Civil Service, 1947-51, Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, 1951-55; Prime Minister, 1955-56.

mander-in-Chief should not have realised that there had been a reconstitution of the Government and a splitting up of the Secretariat Departments. The Financial Adviser, War and Supply, is *ex officio* an Additional Secretary of the Finance Department and the post had therefore necessarily under this order to be divided into two. That was the reason why we immediately recommended on the 19th the appointment of a Financial Adviser (India) There was just the possibility, however, that the Commander-in-Chief was unaware of the promulgation of the Executive (Transitional Provisions) Order, but when I was shown the relevant minutes of the Armed Forces Reconstitution Committee meeting held on Thursday the 24th July, I found that the Commander-in-Chief had ignored this order apparently because (a) he and his Financial Adviser, Mr. Mohammad Ali, had not been consulted, and (b) he considers the whole arrangement to be unworkable! I must express my surprise at what appears to me to be the rather extraordinary conduct of Mr. Mohammad Ali at this meeting. He could not have been unaware of the correct position and yet by his silence he appears to have conveyed that the Commander-in-Chief's understanding of the position was correct. Judging from these minutes, the Commander-in-Chief seems to be gravely perturbed at the suggestion that anyone but Mr. Mohammad Ali should be his Financial Adviser.

May I say that we are gravely perturbed that the opinion and attitude of the Commander-in-Chief in these matters are completely contrary to what we have been given to understand. I think it should be made perfectly clear what the present position is and what the future position may be. So far as the question of a Financial Adviser for Military Finance is concerned, this inevitably must follow the rule laid down about the division between India and Pakistan. It would be absurd, in the circumstances, for any person who has opted for Pakistan, and much more so for one who is the special advocate for Pakistan in the partition proceedings, to be the Chief Adviser of the Commander-in-Chief in regard to our forces. We cannot possibly admit this. A corollary of the position which the Commander-in-Chief would like to have is that we should agree to a joint Military Finance and Accounting Organisation under Mr. Mohammad Ali, if we accept him, or under a British officer. I need not go further into the merits of this particular matter, since the Steering Committee, I understand, is preparing a paper for consideration by the Partition Council on this subject and the two points of view will be clearly brought out in that paper. The only reason for my mentioning it here is to draw your attention to the attitude the Commander-in-Chief is said to have displayed towards the Indian point of view.

Apart from this particular matter, the general attitude of the Com-



mander-in-Chief and presumably his senior advisers does not seem to me to be in keeping with the position as it has developed and as it is going to develop. If that is so, we have to consider afresh how this should be clarified so as to avoid future conflict of opinion on vital matters. The Dominion Government of India will necessarily have definite opinions and a clear policy in regard to its armed forces, and the officers serving in the army, the navy and the air force will have to carry out that policy. The mere fact that the Supreme Commander will be in administrative control for a limited period does not mean that he will during that period be free to carry out administration in accordance with his own ideas. What we have in mind is that he would endeavour so to run the administration during the joint period that the transition from the joint administration to our own administration would be smooth and as nearly in accord as possible with our own ideas regarding the future administration of the forces. If this is not clearly understood there is bound to be a conflict which should be avoided in the interest of all concerned.

The whole set-up of the future Joint Defence Council will have to be reconsidered, if necessary, if there is any doubt in regard to the position of the Indian Government and its defence forces. In a way, the Supreme Commander will have the casting vote and if his general outlook is completely different from our own then clearly the Council will not function at all. This is a matter of great importance.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

#### 14. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
26 July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I received your letter of the 23rd July about Air Marshal Elmhurst. As suggested by you, I saw Elmhurst and Captain Hall yesterday. We have already agreed about Captain Hall taking command of the Indian Navy. You will remember that I suggested to you that Captain Nott should, in addition, remain in India and you approved of this suggestion.

Elmhurst told me that he would gladly undertake this charge, but he made a condition that the Air Force should not be subordinated to the

<sup>1</sup> File No 32(46)/48-PMS

Commander-in-Chief of the land forces. He seemed to think that this subordination might come in the way of the full growth of the Air Force. Of course, all the defence forces will function under the Defence Minister and the Defence Council I understand that this is the practice in most other countries.

I am not an expert in this matter, but I have felt, even apart from Elmhirst's suggestion, that the Air Force should not be subordinated to the Army I had no difficulty, therefore, in agreeing to what Elmhirst said. I feel sure that under him our Air Force will progress rapidly and I am very glad that he has consented to stay on in India and to take charge.

I agree entirely that, in the circumstances, Elmhirst's rank should be that of Air Marshal.

We thus agree to Sir Thomas Elmhirst being put in command of the Indian Air Force and Captain Hall commanding the R.I.N. of the Dominion of India Captain Hall will be promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral.

May I suggest to you that promotion of senior officers in the Indian Army is long overdue. I have mentioned this matter to you previously. The Nationalisation Committee's report suggested early promotion of the Brigadiers to the rank of Major-Generals This was a matter which could have been attended to immediately without any reference to the partition. I trust this will be done very soon, as it is causing some dissatisfaction among large numbers of people.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 15. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
28 July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Thank you for your letter of the 26th/28th July about the employment of Gurkha troops in the British Army

2. I have made it perfectly clear to the Defence Department that the Government of India have agreed in principle to H.M.G. engaging Gurkha troops Certain conditions were mentioned by us and by the

Nepalese Government and these were agreed to by Field Marshal Montgomery. It does not seem to me necessary to refer the matter again to Cabinet. When further details have been worked out, the matter will no doubt go to Cabinet for final sanction. I think it is perfectly open to the Commander-in-Chief to take executive action in the matter.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 16. On the Proposed Transfer of Gurkha Battalions<sup>1</sup>

I have seen the Commander-in-Chief's note<sup>2</sup> dated 31.7.47 about Gurkha battalions being engaged by H.M.G. There is still some misapprehension. We have agreed about the principle but details and conditions have to be worked out in consultation with the Nepal Government. It will be improper for any transfer to take place before those conditions are clearly laid down. The next step therefore is for a conference between the representatives of H.M.G., India and Nepal to work out the details and conditions. The Nepal Government has laid stress on these conditions and we cannot bypass them.

- 1 Quoted in Baldev Singh's note to Auchinleck dated 1 August 1947 R/3/1/147, I O.L.R., London
- 2 Auchinleck had written that he was taking necessary action "to effect the transfer without delay of eight pre-war battalions of Gurkha Rifles to H M G. for service under the Crown"

## 17. The Gurkha Regiments in India<sup>1</sup>

I have seen a telegram to the effect that a questionnaire has been issued to the men of the Gurkha regiments asking them whether they are

1 Note, 13 August 1947 Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No 4(4)-CA/47, p 4/notes, National Archives of India

prepared to serve in the Indian Army or whether they wish to retire. If it has been issued only to the officers, then there is nothing more to be said about it. But if it has been issued to the other ranks also, then I should like to know why this procedure has been adopted.

The question of Gurkha regiments being retained in the Indian Army or being taken over by H.M.G. has been discussed at the highest level for some time past and the Nepal Government has been consulted. Very soon there is likely to be a tripartite conference to consider further details. At this stage it is not clear why the men of the Gurkha regiments should be asked the questions included in the questionnaire. I shall be glad to know why this is being done. This, I may add, is something which, even if it was necessary, required reference to the Nepalese Government.

## 18. To R.M.M. Lockhart<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
15 August 1947

Dear Commander-in-Chief,

Thank you for your letter of the 14th August and for your good wishes.<sup>2</sup>

2. I am very glad to find that there is complete agreement between us regarding the relationship between the Government and those who are in charge of the Defence Forces. It is, of course, incumbent on military advisers to bring to the notice of Government any matter which affects the well-being, morale or efficiency of the troops under their command. I can assure you that the Government of India will value such advice greatly. I feel sure that we shall have little difficulty in cooperating together in the service of India.

3. I hope to be able to see you soon and have a talk with you about the future.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

<sup>1</sup> J.N. Collection

<sup>2</sup> Lockhart congratulated Nehru on his becoming Prime Minister and wrote that he whole-heartedly agreed with Nehru's definition of the relationship between statesmen and soldiers. He felt that it was incumbent on the soldier to carry out the statesman's policy and on military advisers to bring to the notice of their Government any matters which affected the well-being, morale or efficiency of the troops under their command.

## THE L. N. A. PRISONERS

1. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

19 July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

You will remember that the case of the I.N.A. prisoners was considered at length some time ago and ultimately it was decided to refer it to the judges of the Federal Court. I made a statement to this effect in the Legislative Assembly.<sup>2</sup> I do not know how far this consideration by the Federal Court judges has proceeded and when we are likely to have their recommendations.

As you will no doubt appreciate, an entirely new situation arises because of the political changes that have taken place. Normally speaking it would be entirely inappropriate for any political prisoners, or those who are considered as political prisoners, to be kept in prison after the declaration of Indian independence. There would be a widespread feeling among the people that this independence was not real and was only a facade if such prisoners continued to be detained. It seems to me essential therefore that on or before August 15 I.N.A. prisoners should be released. I am quite certain that if this release does not take place, the matter will be raised in the Constituent Assembly which will be functioning then as a sovereign Legislative Assembly.

There is another aspect of this case. It is possible that the Pakistan Government may take some action in this matter and release the prisoners in their charge. If this happens, as it very probably will, then the retention in prisons at the instance of the Indian Government would be very difficult if not impossible, and would give rise to tremendous public opinion.

In view of this situation I wish to suggest to you that very early steps should be taken to release these prisoners. This can be done quite appropriately and without any reference to the past in view of the new political status of India. If this is not done soon, a new public demand will arise and then we shall have to do it in response to that demand. It is thus far better to keep the initiative with ourselves than to be compelled by circumstances to take action.

1 John Connell, *Auchinleck* (London, 1959), p. 895. The full text of the letter is not available.

2 See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol 2, pp. 80, 345, 351-359.

## 2. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
24 July 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Thank you for your letter of the 22nd July, received today, about the I.N.A prisoners.<sup>2</sup>

2. As the Federal Court judges are going to report about these cases very soon, we can consider this matter within the next few days. I would like to say, however, that it appears inconceivable to me that so far as the Government of India are concerned they will retain any of these persons in prison. Many thousands of prisoners, that is, ordinary convicts, are being discharged on or about the 15th August all over India. There are a few political prisoners. But most of them are ordinary convicts. If even at such a juncture the I.N.A. people are not discharged, no Government can retain the confidence of the country. I need not go into the merits of this case as we have discussed them sufficiently on earlier occasions. I only wish to add that I consider this as a matter of vital importance.

3. I have mentioned to Sardar Baldev Singh the desirability of exercising clemency in regard to ordinary military prisoners also on this occasion when so many others are likely to be discharged.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 J.N. Collection

2 Mountbatten informed Nehru that, as mentioned by the Chief Justice of India, the reports on "these cases" would be submitted by 25 July which, he suggested, could later be considered by Nehru, Jinnah and himself as to what action could be taken. He, however, mentioned that the only I.N.A. men still in prison were those on criminal charges of brutality against Indians.

## INDIA IN WORLD AFFAIRS

## I. General



## 1. India for Universal Freedom<sup>1</sup>

We want to build up one world where freedom is universal and there is equality of opportunity between races and peoples.

Standing as we do on the verge of independence and freedom in India, we send our good wishes to the people of Africa. In this long course of our struggle for freedom in India we have realized fully the value of that freedom not only for ourselves but for all others. We have stood, therefore, for the freedom of all people in Asia, Africa or elsewhere. Indeed the world can no longer be divided into part free and part unfree. Any such attempt will lead to trouble and friction and wars. Peace can only be established on the basis of worldwide freedom.

The world has witnessed suffering and misery in every part of it but perhaps the people of Africa have suffered and been exploited more than any other people. They deserve therefore not only the goodwill but the active help of others so that they might raise themselves and have the full benefit of freedom and progress. In this task it will be the privilege of India to help to the best of her ability.

As a gesture towards this the Government of India have inaugurated a number of scholarships (five) for African students in Indian universities. I hope this number will grow and the students who come here from Africa will not only learn something of India but teach us something of Africa. Thus closer relations will be established and mutual understanding will grow.

Indians who live in Africa must always remember that they are the guests of the Africans and that they may not do anything which might interfere with the progress of the Africans towards freedom. They must help Africans to attain their goal and cooperate with them in every way for their mutual advantage. We do not want any Indians to go abroad to exploit the people of any other country. We have suffered enough exploitation in our own country and we want to be rid of it not only here but everywhere.

I send my good wishes to the people of Africa and my fellow countrymen in Africa and I hope that in the difficult days to come they will cooperate together to realize the great ideals we have before us.

1 Message to Africans and Indians in Africa printed in *The Hindustan Times*, 12 June 1947. The message was sent through James Beauttah who attended the Asian Relations Conference as an observer on behalf of the Kenya African Union.

## 2. To Asaf Ali<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
18 June 1947

My dear Asaf,

I have received a sheaf of letters from you dated 4th June. The Palestine report is being examined and the packet for the Commerce Department has been sent on to them

2. One of your letters deals with B.R. Sen<sup>2</sup> and his position in the office and the work he does. This letter deals so much with departmental questions that I am consulting Bajpai about it. I might, however, repeat what I have said previously that I view with great disfavour anything in the nature of unnecessary expenditure. I am not interested at the present moment in personal questions of salaries and allowances and everyone should realise that more important things are being done in India. I do not know what the weather in Washington is like though I am told that it is hot and oppressive for two to three weeks or more. It can hardly be worse than Delhi. I have not found it necessary to have an air cooler in my house and I do not see why our officers abroad cannot do without one and possibly suffer a little discomfort for a few weeks. It is very likely that as soon as we are settled down under the new Government our scales of expenditure will have to be revised and the strictest economy will have to be practised. Everything that we can spare will go towards meeting vital demands in India, for food, relief and development.

3. Your second letter deals with the report of the U.N.O. session. In this you mention the necessity of our having a first-rate man in charge of our U.N.O. work. I agree. For the moment, however, we are terribly short of first-class material and the demands are heavy.

4. Your third letter refers to the dinner you had with the National

1 J N Collection

2 Binay Ranjan Sen (b. 1898), joined Indian Civil Service 1922; Director-General of Food, 1943-46; Secretary, Food Department, 1946, Minister, Embassy of India, Washington, 1947-50, Ambassador to Italy, Yugoslavia, United States, Mexico and Japan between 1950 and 1956, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 1956-67.

City Bank and your visits to various diplomats. All this I have found very interesting.

5. Having briefly dealt with your letters, I shall say something about the situation here. The first thing to bear in mind is that the proposed so-called division of India is in fact a secession of some parts of India. That is to say, India and the Government of India continue as international persons and all our treaties and engagements with other countries also continue. Our membership of the U.N.O continues. In fact there is no change in our external relations whatever because we are a continuing entity. On the other hand the seceding provinces form a new State which has to begin from scratch.

6. I want you to appreciate this fully because there is far too much loose talk of India ending in a sense and giving place to two new States—Pakistan and Hindustan. That is completely wrong in law and in fact.

7. From early in July there is likely to be a marked change in the Interim Government to signify that a decision has been made in regard to separation. This means that we shall be able to function more compactly though the problems of separation will be troublesome. About the middle of August we expect to begin functioning as a Dominion with full powers, though again some part of the separation work will continue.

8. This Dominion Status for India must clearly be understood to be for the interim period. We are not going to give up our objective of a republic. Probably the Constituent Assembly will finish its labours before the end of this year. This will be followed by preparations for new elections and the elections themselves.

9. It is probable that as soon as we function as a Dominion we shall adopt our national flag formally.

10. We are having a hard time and some of the Princes headed by Bhopal and Travancore are giving a great deal of trouble. But I am not personally worried about these Princes. We can deal with them fairly easily when the time comes.

11. As soon as Dominion Status is established or a little after, it may be desirable for you to pay a visit to India. I do not wish to fix any date yet because much depends on developments.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

**3. To Sudhir Ghosh<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
20th June 1947

My dear Sudhir,

I sent you a brief note in answer to your letter some days ago. Almost immediately after that Sardar Patel sent me a copy of your letter to him, dated 28th May.<sup>2</sup> I have read this and have had a talk also with Sardar Patel. He will no doubt write to you separately, but, I think, I owe it to you to write frankly what I feel about this matter.

First of all one thing should be clear to everybody that for anyone to say that you represent Sardar Patel in London and that somebody else represents me is fantastic nonsense; further, that Sardar Patel and I are carrying on different policies of Government is equally silly. We differ in some matters, as intelligent people differ, but we work in the closest cooperation, not only because of our long association and regard for each other, but also because the situation demands it. You represent in London no individual minister or any other person but the Government of India as such and naturally you have to function in accordance with the rules laid down by the Government for that purpose.

Government routine work sometimes descends to the level of playing about with red tape. This is rightly criticised. Nevertheless, there is a value in sticking to certain routine and discipline in any organisation. For this reason, it is necessary to function through the usual channels. Otherwise there is confusion and misunderstanding. In London your superior authority is naturally the High Commissioner and you should go to him for advice and consult him in any worthwhile matter. He is not only your superior officer but is a man of far greater experience of life and of work in London and his advice is likely to be correct. This does not preclude you from dealing directly with the Department of the Government of India with which you are specially connected, that is the Information and Broadcasting Department.

So much for the official side. There is also the personal aspect of this as of other matters. It appears from your letter as well as from some other accounts that you had some difficulty in London and certain controversies have arisen about you. I am not surprised to learn this, because one has always to step warily in a new place and endeavour to

1 Sudhir Ghosh Papers, N M M L

2. In this letter Sudhir Ghosh reported his difficulties in the face of a rapidly spreading propaganda in London, supposedly carried out by members of the India League, that Ghosh had been sent by Patel "in spite of opposition from Pandit Nehru and much against his will" and there was some design behind it.

obtain the goodwill of one's colleagues; otherwise, certain suspicion arises. Politics in India are confused, or apparently so, and the situation changes from day to day. It is difficult for officials of the Government to know always what is exactly happening and what policy should be pursued. With the coming of a new government they would naturally not know whether this indicated any change in policy or not.

Then again, London is a hot-bed of intrigue. The Indians there have a host of organisations existing mostly on paper. There are naturally all kinds of persons amongst our countrymen in England. There is excellent material there and there are also some persons who are totally undesirable. For the rest people float about on the surface having nothing better to do than to criticise others. A newcomer has to face all this before he can find his feet and adapt himself to his new surroundings. If he is at all aggressive or expansive in his methods he will raise opposition.

You have referred in your letter to Krishna Menon and his lieutenants in London; also, to the India League. I happen to know a good deal about both Krishna Menon and his work in London as well as about the India League. Personally, I have a high regard for Krishna Menon and his work and consider him one of our ablest men. He has been doing very good work and we expect him in future to do even more responsible work.

The India League has a variety of people in it. As an organisation it is far the most effective one from India's point of view in England. It has its failings and it has made mistakes in the past. That can be said of every organisation in India or outside. We intend to take full advantage of the India League organisation, in so far as we can.

Krishna Menon has been away from England almost continuously since you went there except for a few very busy days when he went back at our instance. He will be returning to England soon charged with other work on our behalf. You should keep in touch with him, and if you have any grievance you should tell him about it. Normally, of course, you should be guided by Vellodi's advice.

I imagine that you will soon get over your difficulties. How soon depends upon you more than others. We cannot control others, but we can always try to shape our own behaviour so as to overcome difficulties. I think you are capable of doing very good work in England because you are eager, intelligent and enthusiastic. You can make friends and can get on with people, but you still require experience and, if I may say so, are a bit raw. That will go soon enough and it is not very important except that it may create difficulties, to begin with.

I think that your initial contact with politics was rather upside-down. You started on a level of dealing with ministers and others in regard

to high matters of state policy. Though you acted merely as an agent of others in this matter, this accustomed you to a certain procedure which is not the normal procedure. You will remember that when you saw me some months ago I told you that your communicating directly with ministers in England was a risky business, though sometimes it might be useful. It would lead them to suppose that you were representing us when, in fact, you might not be. It might lead to our being committed without the other party committing itself.

I find from your letters such as I have seen in the past and recently that you have not developed enough restraint yet and restraint is a very necessary quality in a person dealing with matters of moment.

I am writing to you frankly, because I like you and I want you to get on. I do not like anything happening which might come in your way and I shall certainly try to prevent such a thing occurring. But I want you to discipline yourself a little more and develop some restraint. All of us have got to undertake increasing responsibilities and the men who can do so are few.

This is entirely a personal letter and is meant for no one else. But I feel that Sardar Patel should see it as well as Mr. Vellodi. I am, therefore, sending them copies of it.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

#### 4. To Vijayalakshmi Pandit<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
23 June 1947

My dear Nan,

I just received your letter and Tara's. I am glad to have received Tara's letter as it gives me some insight into her mind.

I have sent you a telegram today suggesting that you might come here direct from Khali for consultation. I should like to see you soon because many things cannot be settled without reference to you. But I do not want you to cut short your brief holiday in Khali. So come here just when it is convenient to you and do not make your Khali stay shorter than you intended.

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts

In my telegram I could not definitely say that the answer from Moscow has come because this matter is still secret. You may see the announcement in three or four days' time.

We have now to consider all the other details. I think you should leave at the latest at the beginning of August. I am not quite sure what is the best route. I am inquiring into this matter. It is not easy to go direct by special plane. Probably it will be better to go *via* London. But about this I shall find out and let you know.

At least a fortnight before you go, somebody else should precede you to make necessary arrangements for your stay. We have not yet fixed upon the Counsellor and the Secretaries. For the present we intend rather a small staff. It is better to begin this way and add people later than to carry a large number with you. Apart from other difficulties, there is the housing question. We have thus to choose a Counsellor and at least two Secretaries plus some clerical staff. We don't want to fix upon anyone without consulting you. Hence the necessity for you to come here. I am afraid the people who will go with you will not be trained so far as the External Affairs Department is concerned. They will, of course, have some training otherwise. We have none to spare from our office. Chandralekha will, of course, go with you, though in what capacity has yet to be settled.

If you go early in August you will have a clear month in Moscow before you need leave for the U.N.O. meeting. This is too short a period; but in view of special circumstances and the fact that you know Molotov, I do not think there will be any misunderstanding. I should like you to lead our U.N.O. delegation, as you did last time.

I want very much to see Indu settle down for the time being in Lucknow. Feroze must carry on with the *Herald*, and it is right that Indu should live there for a good part of the year. Feroze told me that it is hardly possible to get a house in Lucknow. Could you help in this? It does not matter how small the house is, or perhaps even part of a house. . . .

Feroze and Indu accompanied me to Hardwar and from there went on to Mussoorie. Feroze, I suppose, is on his way to Lucknow now or will go in a day or so.

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal

## 5. Full Support to the United Nations<sup>1</sup>

Two years ago the Charter was signed which formed the basis of United Nations Organization. Whatever weaknesses or defects the U.N. has, they are due to the weaknesses of the member countries. In spite of these weaknesses, the organization has made progress during the two years and if the world can be saved from war for some years, the organization will become sufficiently strong.

India wants to practise tolerance and live in peace with other nations. Because of the internal strife in the country the primary need is to evolve a strong central power in the country. Many things have happened in India which are not pleasant, but they have to be accepted under the stress of circumstances. But we are determined to face our country's problems boldly. Some of our dreams have become a reality and other dreams will soon become real.

There is the need for breadth of vision to understand world problems and to rise above internal troubles. Nations are the pillars of the U.N.O. whose strength depends on the strength of nations. India will be a strong pillar of the U.N.O.

- 1 Speech at a function to commemorate the second anniversary of signing of the United Nations Charter, New Delhi, 26 June 1947. From *The Hindustan Times*, 27 June 1947.

## 6. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
30 June 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

I am enclosing a copy of a secret letter received by my Department from the Minister at Kabul. Some sentences in it might interest you.

2. The recently appointed Director of Civil Aviation in India, Mr M I Rahim,<sup>2</sup> recently went to Kabul on behalf of the Government.

1 J N Collection

2 Muhammad Inamur Rahim, Secretary to Ministry of Commerce and Industries, Government of India, 1941, Commissioner of Settlements, 1942, appointed Director-General of Civil Aviation in 1947.



India in connection with an aviation agreement.<sup>3</sup> His mission failed and there was no agreement. But according to the Minister's letter, Mr. Rahim visited Afghan officials as Mr. Jinnah's personal representative in Afghanistan. He visited in the same capacity as the Turkish, French and American Ministers in Kabul and talked about Pakistan. I have no objection to Mr. Jinnah sending a personal representative to Afghanistan. But it does seem undesirable for an official of the Government of India on a Government mission to function as such.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

- 3 On 22 May 1947 the Government of India sent an air delegation to Kabul under the leadership of Inamur Rahim to negotiate a commercial air agreement between India and Afghanistan to provide regular services between Quetta, Peshawar, Kabul, Kandahar and Herat

## 7. To Abdur Rahman<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
10th July 1947

My dear Rahman.

Thank you for your letter of June 25th which I read with interest.<sup>2</sup> You have got a difficult job; but I have no doubt whatever that you will feel equal to it.

In the last paragraph of your letter you refer to the division of India on August 15th.<sup>3</sup> The problem which you mention is really no problem at all and the position is quite clear. This position is that certain provinces and areas of India have elected to secede from the parent country and to form a separate state. This does not affect the international status of India as a continuing entity, and all our old obligations and commitments continue. The separation of Burma from India a dozen years ago

- 1 Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No. 2(71)-UNO-1/47, pp 51-53, National Archives of India
- 2 Abdur Rahman had reported on the work of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine which was touring Palestine at the time
- 3 Abdur Rahman felt that after 15 August 1947 the two "dominions" would have to apply separately for membership of the United Nations.

offers a parallel. That made no difference to India as an international person. The seceding provinces and areas now form a new State, called "Pakistan", and it is open to them to have their own agreements and arrangements with other nations, or to apply to the U.N.O. for admission. We shall help them in this, in so far as we can. Thus India continues as before and a new state, Pakistan, comes into existence. There is no doubt about this matter, so far as interpretations of international law are concerned. Eminent lawyers, both in India and in England, were of this opinion. As a matter of fact, the Indian Independence Bill that is now being considered in Parliament has confirmed this.

Your position on the Palestine Special Committee is not affected in any way. I might point out that it is not quite correct to say that you were nominated by the United Nations<sup>4</sup> India was chosen as one of the countries to be represented on the Special Committee. The nomination of the representative from India was done by the Government of India and not by the United Nations. In any event, this question, as I have stated above, does not arise

With all good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

4 Abdur Rahman had written that his position on the Special Committee on Palestine might not be affected as "I was nominated by the United Nations, although on the recommendation of the Indian Government, at a time when India was a member of the United Nations"

## 8. To Robin Mirrlees<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
14 July 1947

My dear Rohin,<sup>2</sup>

Thank you for your letter of the 1st June which I enjoyed reading. You will forgive me if my reply is brief. But I want to tell you that I really liked your letter and I hope that you will continue writing from time to time and give me your impressions of Japan.

1. J.N. Collection.

2 Robin Mirrlees (b 1925), served in India, 1942-46, Captain, Royal Artillery, 1944, General Staff, New Delhi, 1946, Embassy Attache, Tokyo, 1947; A D C to the King of Yugoslavia, 1963-70, co-editor, *Annuaire de France*, since 1966

I am afraid I have little peace here of mind or body, and there is no prospect of rest or travel abroad.

As you must know, we have sent a new Representative to Japan, Sir B. Rama Rau. When he came to say goodbye to me, I told him about you. His daughter, Shanta, is accompanying him to Japan. I hope you will meet them.

You will always be welcome in India whenever duty or pleasure may bring you here.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

#### 9. Telegram to Edward Atiyah<sup>1</sup>

18 July 1947

Grateful to you for your telegram.<sup>2</sup> I earnestly trust that free India will stand and work for the freedom of Asia and for a free and cooperative world.

1. P.I.B.

2. Edward Atiyah sent a telegram of congratulations to Nehru on the occasion of the passing of the Indian Independence Bill. He expressed the jubilation of the entire Arab world on the achievement of India's freedom.

#### 10. To V.V. Giri<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
20 July 1947

My dear Giri,

Thank you for your letter of the 16th July. I hasten to reply to it in order to clear up any misapprehension about your position after August 15th.<sup>2</sup>

1. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No 62-A/47-OS II, pp 5-6/corr. National Archives of India

2. Giri was the representative of the Government of India in Sri Lanka. He had wished to know what his position would be, after 15 August, with regard to Pakistan.

2. Recent political developments and the Indian Independence Act have resulted in creating two Dominions. This in effect amounts to the Government of India continuing as before but as a Dominion. The international person that is India has not been affected by the change and all our foreign representations and commitments remain. Pakistan, on the other hand, is a new State which will have to build up its foreign representation as it likes.

3. You will represent therefore, after August 15th, the Dominion of India only and not Pakistan. Of course we are prepared to do any service for Pakistan abroad till such time as they have their own representation. But you are distinctly not the representative of Pakistan.

4. I want to make it perfectly clear also that we do not propose to recognise the independence of Travancore or Hyderabad or any other State. Therefore you should continue to treat Travancoreans in Ceylon as being under your charge just like any other Indians.<sup>3</sup> Probably this question will be settled before very long. In any case you should not admit that there is any change in the status of Travancoreans in Ceylon or that they will cease to be eligible for franchise.

5. I do not think any useful purpose will be served if we had a meeting of our representatives in Ceylon, Malaya and Burma.<sup>4</sup> In Malaya Thivy is just taking charge. Dr. Rauf from Burma is here now and will be going back to Burma soon. The tragedy in Rangoon overshadows everything else there.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Giri had asked to what extent he could and should speak on behalf of the people of Travancore on the question of their status vis-a-vis Sri Lanka.

4. Giri had suggested such a meeting.

## 11. Telegram to Asaf Ali<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
22 July 1947

Your telegram 630 of 18th July.

1 External Affairs Department File No 11(37)-IA/47, Sr. No 48, National Archives of India

2. It is not clear whether you have mentioned possibility of American intervention in this case to your Afghan colleague.<sup>2</sup> If so it is likely to prove most embarrassing and may vitiate effect of any friendly advice which State Department may decide to give Afghans.

3. I should be grateful if you would not take any further initiative in this matter either with Afghan Minister or with Shah Mahmud,<sup>3</sup> Afghan Prime Minister, who will shortly arrive in America on private visit, without seeking instructions from me.

4. I hope to discuss matter informally with Shah Mahmud when he passes through Delhi this week.

Jawaharlal Nehru

2. Asaf Ali had cabled to Nehru that he had a private discussion with the Afghan minister. Afghanistan intensely disliked the intervention of third parties. He asked Nehru to consider a personal and informal talk with the Afghan Consul General in Delhi
3. Shah Mahmud Khan, War Minister of Afghanistan, 1929-46; Prime Minister, 1946-53

## 12. To V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
22 July 1947

My dear Krishna,

I received your letter of the 20th July today,<sup>2</sup> also your notes on the National Government and Mrs. Pandit's visit to Moscow. I have also received your two long telegrams—one about your various meetings with Ministers and others in London,<sup>3</sup> and the other about Indonesia.

2. I have been greatly upset by the assassinations in Rangoon. But I do not know that we can do anything in the matter. On receipt of news of Aung San's murder, I was asked if the Indian troops in Burma could

1 V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N M M L

2. Krishna Menon set down in this letter some impressions on events around him.

3 Krishna Menon had met Cripps, Listowel, Henderson and leading personalities from political groups. He had also made contacts in quarters where public opinion could be moulded

be used to put down widespread disorder. There are, as a matter of fact, few Indian regiments left there, and this was done at the express request of the Burmese Government to deal with the widespread dacoities that were taking place. We have been withdrawing our troops from Burma and the last of these should have come soon. Recently we had a request that they might continue there till March next. We agreed subject to various conditions that we laid down. Among these was that they should not be used in any sense for suppressing the Burmese people.

3. There is a large Indian population in Rangoon and elsewhere in Burma. When disorders take place they are in some danger. When I was asked three days ago about the use of Indian troops in case of widespread disorder, I agreed. As a matter of fact, thus far nothing much has happened since the assassinations except arrests.

4. The news from Indonesia was a bit of a shock though we were partly prepared for it. Today's paper says that Dr. Shahrir has reached Singapore and is coming to India. I have no other news of him. He may arrive here in a day or two and he will, no doubt, give us further information.

5. We have been communicating with the British Government and the U.S.A. about Indonesia and emphasising the need for some kind of arbitration and the grave dangers of hostilities. We have again sent a long message today to this effect. You must have also received our telegram.

6. It is clear that India must do all that is possible in this matter. We have also to take the public into our confidence to some extent. Apart from stressing the need for the cessation of hostilities and for arbitration, what else can we do? We must invoke the U.N.O. We are trying to do so in cooperation with the U.K. and the U.S.A. If they do not agree, we shall do it by ourselves. I am awaiting a reply from you.

7. I do not think it is necessary for you to go to The Hague, at any rate, at present.

8. There is another aspect of this question to be considered. The K.L.M. flies across India according to agreement and, no doubt, it takes officers, military and civil, to Indonesia. Can we prevent this kind of thing? There is already some agitation that this should be done.

9. The Dutch Ambassador has not come yet and there is no important person at their Embassy here at present. We are keeping in touch on this issue with the American Embassy. But the response of the State Department thus far has not been encouraging.

10. I have read your note on the National Government.<sup>4</sup> It is not very easy to function as you would like us to function. There are too many stresses and strains. We have not yet finally decided about Governors and about the addition of some Members to the Government. But I suppose we must come to a decision within the next three or four days simply because time is limited.

11. Your note about Mrs. Pandit has been handed over to the man in charge in our office and a copy will be given to her. She will be coming here in three or four days' time. I am rather surprised to learn about the revolver.<sup>5</sup> This has no importance in itself, and my sister does not carry about a revolver normally. But I should have thought that a revolver was often the normal equipment for a person. Suppose the plane comes down somewhere *en route*. However, you need not bother about this

12. The Hindu Mahasabha is going strong here and is likely to give us a good deal of trouble. The difficulty is that they have no intelligent men with whom one could deal. The partition business has excited Hindus tremendously and all their wrath is turned against the Congress which is supposed to be guilty of agreeing to this partition. As a matter of fact some of the Hindu Mahasabha leaders were even more anxious for the partition. But having got it, they now declaim against it.

13. The position in the Frontier Province is very odd, and we have had no special information recently. I am afraid there is going to be trouble there and unsettled conditions for a considerable time. Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Dr. Khan Sahib are not likely to submit to the Jinnah

4 Krishna Menon had envisaged a National Government "of all the talents" and a team representing as much homogeneity as possible. It need not be an elected committee nor its members Congress workers. He suggested a cabinet of 20 members. The Prime Minister could discuss matters with any section of his cabinet according to the nature of the matter

5 The note mentioned that the protection of the Indian Ambassador while in the U.S.S.R. was a responsibility of the Soviet Government. The Soviet law prevented the introduction into the U.S.S.R. of revolvers from outside, and if Mrs. Pandit wished to possess one it had been suggested that she might take this up in Moscow personally with Molotov.

regime, and there might even be conflict on a biggish scale. We are rather cut off from the N.W.F.P.

14. In regard to the States, I think Mountbatten is putting considerable pressure on them to join the Constituent Assembly. We haven't had any answer yet from Hyderabad, and C.P. is behaving as badly as ever. Kashmir continues to be mum.

15. I feel greatly how much out of touch I am with the present sentiments of the Hindus. Over many matters we rub each other the wrong way and I fear that the Constituent Assembly is not going to be an easy companion. The Muslim Leaguers in the Constituent Assembly have thus far behaved rather well. So on the whole have the States people. But there will be some friction over some matters. Our general proposal to the States is that they should join the Union immediately on the basis of the three subjects. Possibly many might agree.

16. There is a terrible shortage of officers in the Government of India departments and elsewhere. The departure of the British element and the Pakistani element on top of the war shortage is making it difficult for us to carry on adequately. We cannot think of sending any senior or junior servicemen abroad till the position is clearer.

17. What exactly do you expect us to do about the Indians in Paris?<sup>6</sup>

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal

6 Krishna Menon had written: "There are a number of Indians in Paris whose position calls for attention, and they have been constantly writing to me to do something about it and to go and meet them. Something should be done about them, at least to make them feel that they are not forgotten."

### 13 To J.B. Kripalani<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
25 July 1947

My dear Jivat,

I have your letter of the 25th July. I am afraid I am hard pressed for time and cannot answer it as fully as I would like. Any attempt to do so would mean a long letter. For the present I only wish to say that

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.



you seem to have misunderstood very much what I have said or done in regard to Burma or Indonesia.

2. Whatever I have done about Burma has been in strict accordance with the policy laid down by the Cabinet during the last few months.<sup>2</sup> There is no question of our using our forces in the quarrels of other countries. Our forces have been withdrawn from Burma at a rapid pace and only a few thousand remain at the request of the Burmese National Government and not of a party. These also will be coming back in the course of the next few months.

3. During the past ten months our policy has been to withdraw all Indian troops from overseas. We have practically succeeded in this except for a relatively small number in Burma and some technicians and specialist corps in Malaya. These also are gradually coming back.

4. We have made it clear in Burma that our troops cannot be used to suppress any group or party or against the national aspirations of the people. They were largely meant to protect Indians there who were in grave danger because of disturbed conditions. We had also authorised the Government (not a party) to use them for internal order if a crisis arose. This chiefly referred to widespread dacoities which were taking place there. When news was brought to me of Aung San's murder, there was a grave fear that there might be looting and murder on a large scale in Rangoon in which Indians might be involved. I was asked that if this crisis arose the Indian troops there could be used. This question was unnecessary as our previous directions covered it. However I repeated that if such a contingency arose, our troops could be used to protect people. As a matter of fact no such contingency has fortunately arisen.

5. In regard to Indonesia, no question has arisen of the employment of troops or any kind of war material.<sup>3</sup> Indeed no such use can be made

2. Criticising the statement of Nehru at the Working Committee meeting on 20 July 1947 Kripalani wrote to Nehru that he (Nehru) had authorised the use of Indian troops in Burma evidently for policing purposes without ascertaining the opinion of the Working Committee. He further said that India should not embroil itself through the use of its troops in the internal political controversies and quarrels of foreign nations.

3. Referring to Nehru's statement to the press on 25 July that India would give all possible help to Indonesia in her present struggle, Kripalani, in the same letter, said that such a declaration on behalf of India could not be made without the question being raised in the cabinet or in the Working Committee, if it included the use of Indian troops.

without a formal declaration of war. The only question of help that arises is diplomatic help or some initiative being taken in regard to the U.N.O. We have proceeded in this matter thus far in close consultation with the U.K., U.S.A. and Australia.

6. I am afraid this is a brief answer giving some facts. It does not deal with many of the bigger questions that you have raised. If you feel that these should be discussed, I shall gladly welcome the opportunity. Perhaps for this purpose a meeting of the Working Committee would be necessary.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

#### 14. To Tej Bahadur Sapru<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
27 July 1947

My dear Tej Bahadurji,

Thank you for your letter of the 21st July<sup>2</sup> I am very sorry to learn of the state of your health. I have been wanting to go over to Allahabad specially to see you, But unfortunately work here has prevented me from leaving Delhi. I hope, however, to visit you before very long.

The increase of the violence is most distressing and Aung San's murder has hit me very hard. I appreciate all that you have written and you can rest assured that I shall look after myself.<sup>3</sup>

I agree with you that it is distressing to see a spirit of revivalism spreading in India.

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Tej Bahadur Sapru Papers (microfilm), N M M.L.

2. Though Sapru disliked partition, he saw the wisdom of the decision and refrained from criticism of it. While acknowledging the general feeling that partition was an accomplished fact, he doubted whether it would be followed by peace.

3. Alarmed by the murder of the Executive Councillors in Burma, Sapru feared for the lives of Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru at the hands of politicians who masqueraded as Congressmen or those who pretended to be great protectors of the Hindn cause

## 15. Mountbatten's Note on Interview with Nehru<sup>1</sup>

I told him that Sir Stafford and Lady Cripps were probably proceeding to Burma in about a month's time, and that if he had no objection, I intended to invite them to stay with me in Delhi on the way there or back. He expressed great pleasure at their visit, and entirely agreed

2. I gave him Lord<sup>2</sup> and Lady Addison's plans for their passing through India on the way to the Conference in Canberra on 18th/19th August. I told him that Lord Addison was prepared to be put up by the B.O.A.C. in Calcutta for that night; but Pandit Nehru was of the opinion that I should get in touch with the new Governor (who would probably be Mr. Rajagopalachari) and ask him whether he would like to put up the Commonwealth Relations Secretary, and even though he had only just taken over, he would probably be glad to do so. I undertook to do this

3. I also said that he would like to visit Delhi and Pakistan on his way back about the 25th October, and Pandit Nehru expressed great pleasure at the prospect of his visit. He asked me to confirm the arrangements in writing to him when they were more fully known.

4. I asked him whether he himself could attend the Conference in Canberra or send a high level representative. He told me he intended sending Mr. Rama Rau, who had gone as Indian Ambassador to Tokyo, and that he would probably give him a subordinate official from Delhi to put him in the picture. I urged that he should send one of his Cabinet Ministers from Delhi to such an important Conference, and he agreed he would have liked to do so but for the fact that it would mean leaving within a day or two of the formation of the new Government when nobody would have got a grip of their new portfolios or of the situation

1 29 July 1947 Lord Mountbatten Papers, Broadlands Archives, Broadlands, Romsey, Hampshire

2 Christopher first Viscount Addison (1869-1951), practised medicine before entering politics; Liberal Member of Parliament, 1910-22 and Labour Member of Parliament, 1929-31, and 1934-35. Minister of Reconstruction, 1917 and of Health, 1919-21 in the Coalition government, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, 1930-31; Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, 1945-47, Paymaster-General, 1948-49, Lord Privy Seal, 1947-51, Leader of House of Lords, 1945-51

5. I referred to the desire of the British Government to discuss overall Commonwealth defence arrangements with both India and Pakistan as soon as the two Governments were set up, and said I thought the Chiefs of Staffs would either come themselves or send high powered representatives to hold discussions with the Joint Defence Council in Delhi. Pandit Nehru welcomed this wholeheartedly as he thought it was a most necessary move, particularly as it would facilitate discussion of questions of mutual assistance between Pakistan and India.

6. I next discussed the letter from the Governor's Secretary Bihar of the 18th July, about reduction of the Central Government's grant to Bihar for development expenditure. I read the letter over to him, and he said it was the first he had heard of it, but he presumed that this was following the general standstill policy of the Government, and to enable the new Dominion Government to take stock of the situation before deciding what the grants should be. He told me that it was his intention soon after the setting up of the new Government to take up the whole question of planning. He had it in mind to appoint a strong Planning Commission and to produce a series of plans on the Russian model, a one-year, five-year and ten-year plan, to be revised annually. Bihar had a peasant population in a potentially very rich province, and its development would certainly not be overlooked.

7. I next referred to the unfortunate confusion over the Commander-in-Chief, and the reconstitution of the Government. I assured him of my complete faith in Field Marshal Auchinleck's integrity. If proof were needed of his impartiality, it was to be found in the fact that the League, Congress and the Services Clubs in London, were all equally convinced that he was not adequately looking after the interests of Muslims, Hindus and the British element. I assured him that the Field Marshal had not read my order splitting the Government, and that the remarks recorded in the minutes were made in perfectly good faith, and in complete ignorance of what the new Government policy was.<sup>3</sup> I told him the C.-in-C. was asking Sir Chandulal Trivedi to come up and visit him at the beginning of August, and I was sure that Trivedi would be able to convince him of the genuineness of the misunderstanding, and help to clear up the confusion.

8. I asked him whether he wished me to continue to have fortnightly letters from Governors, and to reply to them. I described what these

<sup>3</sup> See *ante*, section 8, item 13

letters were like, and he informed me that he would very much like these letters to continue on the condition that the Governors showed their draft letters to their Prime Ministers before despatch, but on the understanding that Prime Ministers would not have the power to alter a letter, but would have a right to demand that his version of the explanation of events should be included in the same letter. The Governors would show their Prime Ministers my letters; and I would carry out the same procedure with Pandit Nehru in Delhi.

9. I told him I sent a weekly personal report to the King, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. I presumed that after the 15th August, he would wish me, as a constitutional Governor-General, to cease this practice. He told me he thought that I was quite right in offering to stop it. I then asked whether he had any objection to my writing a fortnightly letter to the King in view of the fact that he was still the King in India, and I was his representative. Nehru said he saw no objection whatever to this. I asked if I might make these letters personal, and not show them to Nehru. He said he trusted me implicitly in this matter, and that I could do as I wished.

10 I made a great point of discussing the composition of the new Dominion Cabinet. I said I had no idea who the new Members would be, but I was absolutely convinced that unless he got a really sound Cabinet in which young, talented and enthusiastic members predominated, he would lose a great opportunity of gripping the imagination of the country. I told him I thought his greatest weakness was his personal loyalty towards old friends and colleagues, and that unless he got rid of a lot of top-weights like Rajagopalachari, he would find himself greatly hampered. I told him I thought that Bhabha and Matthai should both be kept since they were extremely able and fearless. I told him that Baldev appeared to me to be unsatisfactory as Defence Member, that Rajendra Prasad was a dear old man, and ought to become the Speaker in the House, and that, in general, it was essential that he should get a crowd of really good young men. With such a Cabinet the Congress could remain in power for the next few years; without it, it was done.

11. He agreed in principle, but said that there was a remarkable dearth of good young men between the ages of 30 and 45, but it was his intention to pick unknown men and put them in as Deputy Secretaries or Parliamentary Secretaries to get experience. I told him I thought that this was a serious matter for India, and I sincerely trusted he would give it his closest personal attention. I expressed the hope that he would not

mind the constitutional Governor-General giving him this friendly advice, and he said that, on the contrary, he would always look to me for advice on such matters.

## 16. To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
10 August, 1947

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

As you are aware, our view all along has been that as a result of the separation of some areas from India, the international position of India is not affected. Thus the Dominion of India continues as a member of all international organizations of which the old Government of India were members. Our Ambassadors and Ministers abroad also continue to represent the Dominion of India just as they represented the old Government of India. Pakistan being a new Dominion which comes into being as a result of secession has to claim membership of international organisations as a new entity wherever the rules of membership of the organization in question prescribe a special procedure for the admission of new members. Pakistan also can develop diplomatic relations with other countries.

2. This position has been recognised and it is stated clearly in the Order-in-Council, which it is proposed to issue soon<sup>2</sup> Clause 2 of this Order-in-Council states that "membership of all international organizations together with the rights and obligations attaching to such membership will devolve solely upon the Dominion of India."

3. For some time past our Permanent Representative<sup>3</sup> with the United Nations in New York has been informing us that the British attitude at the U.N. has been different from this. I have just heard from him again and he tells us that "the British have informally mentioned that both the Dominions should succeed as members in place of the present Government of India" This report is obscure and indicates that the British representatives at the United Nations are following a policy in regard to this matter, which is not in conformity with our policy.

1 File No 32(46)/48-PMS

2 The Indian Independence (International Arrangements) Order, 1947, was issued on 14 August 1947

3. Dr P P Pillai

4. I shall be grateful if you will kindly ask H.M.G. for the earliest possible clarification of their intentions. We have, of course, no objection to Pakistan becoming a member of the United Nations. What we do not want is any interruption of our own membership. It should be made perfectly clear that we continue to remain members.<sup>4</sup>

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

4 On 13 August Mountbatten replied that the U.N.O. had agreed with Britain that India would continue the international personality of the "old India" and that Pakistan should apply for fresh membership. Liaquat Ali Khan had accepted this view.

## INDIA IN WORLD AFFAIRS

## II. Indonesia



1. To Amir Sharifoeddin<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
6 July 1947

Dear Mr. Sharifoeddin,<sup>2</sup>

Thank you for your letter of June 27th which I received yesterday. I have discussed this matter fully with the friends who came from Indonesia and they will, no doubt, report to you the substance of our talks.

2. We have been following with interest and anxiety the development of events in Indonesia. I appreciate entirely what you say in your letter about these recent events and about the policy of the Dutch to interfere with your freedom. Need I say that our sympathy and the sympathy of the whole of India is with you in this matter and we would gladly help you to the best of our ability?

3. As you must know, India is passing through a very critical phase and a part of the country is seceding from the rest. This has involved us in innumerable difficulties. It is true that from the 15th August onwards our Government will be a substantially free Government. Nevertheless the process of division ties our hands in many ways till the division is complete. This affects the Army more than any other Department and British administration of the Army will continue for a while. On the 15th of August India will become a Dominion of the British Commonwealth. We are at the same time evolving in our Constituent Assembly a constitution for an independent sovereign Republic. When this constitution comes into effect, probably some time next year, the Indian Republic will come into being

4. All these changes have put a great burden upon us and have produced conditions of instability and tension. Our first problem is to form a stable and strong Government and at the same time to deal effectively with the question of the large number of Indian States. This is going to take up all our energy

5. At present our Army is almost completely under British control. After the 15th August it will be partly under our control as the division proceeds. Even so the British element in the higher ranks will be considerable. We hope to have substantial control of the Army by the first of April next.

1. JN. Papers, N M M L

2. Prime Minister of Indonesia. July 1947-January 1948, executed in 1948

6. I have read in today's papers that your Government has accepted the Dutch terms for an interim government.<sup>3</sup> I realise that you must have done so under extreme pressure and with a view to avoid at present a disastrous conflict. This acceptance produces a new situation and has to be dealt with as such. For the present conflict is avoided. But I have little doubt that the Dutch will now try to gain control of not only your Army but also of some of the interior areas. I do not, of course, know the exact terms of your agreement with them. Much would depend upon that. But whatever these terms might be, tension and the elements of conflict will remain. The Dutch will try to consolidate their new position and to make inroads in your existing liberties. Presumably you will object to this process and resist it. What is the procedure that you should adopt?

7. I hesitate to suggest anything partly because it would be presumptuous on my part to advise and partly because I have not full knowledge of the facts. I would suggest, however, that you should explore the possibilities of international arbitration. I should have thought that even, in the controversy of the last few months between you and the Dutch you should have called for arbitration in terms of your previous agreement. If the Dutch had refused this arbitration, you would have been in a strong position to appeal to world opinion.

8. Even now, when any question of interpretation or any friction arises, you should immediately ask the Dutch that it should be referred to arbitration. This arbitration may consist of a representative of yours, a representative of the Dutch Government, and a third person chosen by the two or nominated by the International Court of Justice at The Hague or by the President of the United States. If the Dutch refuse this, then you can make a direct appeal to the Big Powers and others, notably to the U.S.A., and to Great Britain, and ask them to bring pressure to bear on the Dutch to accept arbitration which is obviously the right course when there is danger of conflict. The next step again will be for you to raise the matter before the United Nations Organization. It can be raised by any member of the Security Council at your instance. Syria is at present a member and could well do this. The last stage would be the consideration of the issue by the United Nations General Assembly.

3. The Indonesian Coalition Cabinet had on 5 July 1947 accepted the Dutch proposals, agreeing to implement the Linggadjati agreement. The agreement provided for a United States of Indonesia under the Dutch Crown, to be formed in 1949, with the Netherlands Crown Representative in charge during the transition period.

9. How far all this is limited now by your new agreement, I cannot say. But I think that an occasion is bound to arise when you will have to appeal for arbitration. I am rather sorry that such an appeal was not made previously.

10. We are inquiring into the matter of your credit balances with the Government of India. There should be no difficulty in your utilising them for purchases in India in terms of Indian currency. But we shall not be able to provide you with foreign currency or exchange except possibly in very small quantities for the expenses of missions etc. This matter and connected matters in regard to the purchase of rice by India from Indonesia are being inquired into by Mr. Sudarsono.<sup>4</sup> He has already met our Food Minister and will meet him again.

11. You must be aware that we decided some time ago to send a Consul General to Batavia and a Consul to Jogjakarta. The whole purpose of our sending these people was to maintain intimate contacts with your Government and to help you in every way possible to us. In view, however, of the position of the Dutch internationally and to some extent in Indonesia, we thought that the most suitable method was as proposed. This would not give rise to any argument, and while conforming to international usage would at the same time bring us into intimate contact with you. Perhaps you know that recently we have decided to exchange Ambassadors with the Netherlands. The position in regard to Indonesia was a somewhat ambiguous one from the point of view of strict legality and constitutional procedure. We did not wish to raise questions of legality and at the same time we were anxious to send our men there to maintain contact with you.

12. The new agreement to which reference was made in today's papers rather strengthens the position of the Dutch and I do not quite know how it will affect the situation. We are going into that matter and we shall consult our Indonesian friends who are here before coming to a decision. It is obvious that we do not wish to do anything which is not approved of by your Government. Our whole purpose is to act in accord with your Government and to help it.

4. An Indonesian Trade Mission headed by Dr. Sudarsono, former Food Minister, with about a dozen officials arrived in Delhi on 6 July 1947, to consider the export of 1,000,000 tons of surplus rice from Indonesia in return for textiles and consumer goods. The Mission included a banking expert to study Indian currency.

13. I am glad to learn that you are preparing a five-year plan of intensive development of Java and Sumatra. These islands are very rich in resources and I am quite sure that in the future they will develop rapidly. In so far as we can be of any help, we shall of course be available to you. But as we are ourselves in the middle of a critical period of change and development, our energies are absorbed in this business. The next year is going to be a difficult one for us from every point of view. Those difficulties, however, will not prevent us from offering such help as we can to your Government.

14. The main thing is that we should keep in intimate touch with each other and that we should know exactly what is happening in Indonesia and how and when we can help. We shall try to do so on the diplomatic level as well as other levels. I am eager myself to visit Indonesia; but I fear this is not possible in the near future.

15. Please rest assured that India and her people will stand by you in the future and we hope to cooperate together for our common advantage. For us it is not only a question of sentiment and friendly feelings, but also of our own interest. We cannot look on as passive spectators to the establishment of European imperialism in any part of Asia, much less in South East Asia. That affects us and our own freedom for which we have struggled for so long. Our friends who are going back to Indonesia will give you a fuller account of our conversations.

With all good wishes to you and *Merdeka*,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 2. An Impartial Tribunal for Indonesia<sup>1</sup>

I spoke to the Viceroy about this matter.<sup>2</sup> He agreed that we should communicate with H.M.G. and U.S.A. He suggested however that we should link this with the visit of the Indonesian Food Delegation here

1 Note, 8 July 1947. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No 114-FEA/47, Vol. 1, p 20/n, National Archives of India.

2 G.S. Bajpai had in his note of 8 July 1947 suggested that British and American support should be secured before suggesting that the Indonesians and the Dutch should refer their disagreement to an impartial tribunal.

This would give a personal touch to our message which would attract attention more than if we relied merely on newspaper information.

### 3. Cable to Lord Listowel<sup>1</sup>

Reference correspondence resting with your telegram 8416 of July 3rd. Impression has been steadily growing in India where sympathy with Indonesian nationalist aspirations is very strong that the Dutch having now collected a large army in Java will try to overwhelm the Indonesians by military force unless Dutch demands are accepted. Our information derived from Indonesian Food Mission which has just arrived in India is that such a move may be made at any moment. This lends to situation a degree of urgency which in our opinion calls for immediate mediatory initiative to prevent outbreak of hostilities a development which is likely to have gravest repercussions. For although Dutch may score military victory against main body of Indonesian army guerilla warfare will persist. Indonesians may suffer great hardship but hostilities will be protracted and strain on Holland's resources in men and money will be so great as to weaken that country permanently in Europe without any countervailing gain in Asia. (Indeed hostile action against Indonesia will involve for Holland the forfeiture of sympathy of the whole of Asia) Meanwhile disturbed state of important segment of South East Asia will be a constant threat to the peace of the whole of that region and economic recovery of the world will be hampered by paralysis of economic recovery in Indonesia. Apart from their strong moral sympathy for the cause of Indonesian freedom, Government of India feel these broad political and economic considerations render a speedy, just and peaceful settlement of Indonesian problem imperative. Moreover Indonesia is a source of food supply whose security and prosperity are of vital importance to India.

2. Since negotiations which have now lasted for some months have failed to resolve differences between the Indonesians and the Dutch, Government of India think that as provided in article 17(2) of the Linggadjati Agreement all matters in dispute arising out of the agreement should be referred to arbitration. We understand that this agreement has been ratified by both countries and in view of grave conse-

1. New Delhi, 8 July 1947. V K Krishna Menon Papers, N M M L.

quences of an outbreak of hostilities it seems to be duty of both parties to resort to an agreed and peaceful method of settlement such as arbitration by an impartial body. The Government of India propose to suggest this procedure to both the Dutch and the Indonesian Governments. They would be glad if H.M.G. in U.K. and Government of U.S.A. both of whom are conscious of urgent need of restoring stability and peace to Indonesia will lend strong diplomatic support to this proposal. In view of urgency of matter an expression of H.M.G.'s opinion is immediately requested. Steps are being taken to ascertain attitude of U.S. Government through the American Ambassador in New Delhi and also through Indian Ambassador in Washington.

#### 4. Cable to Lord Listowel<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
18 July 1947

Your telegram 9091 dated July 15th Indonesia. According to report appearing in this morning's papers present Indonesian Premier declared over Radio Jogjakarta on July 16th that "In full knowledge of our responsibility, the Republic has rejected all Dutch demands and the situation is critical. The Dutch attitude leaves no doubt that they want to avert the road of peace". According to same report a high Netherlands informant said that Dutch executive would decide on July 17th whether military action would be undertaken against Indonesian Republic and indicated that such action was extremely likely. It is not possible for us to appraise accuracy of these reports. We will repeat however that outbreak of hostilities in Indonesia will be a threat to peace of whole of South East Asia and a hindrance to economic recovery of the world. Indian opinion is profoundly disturbed by possibility of military action on the part of Dutch and we would strongly urge H.M.G. should do everything in their power to prevent an armed conflict.

2. As regards Dutch contention that Article No. 17 of Linggadjati Agreement is not applicable to their present differences with Indonesia but only to disputes over interpretation, we confess that we have been unable to follow the arguments *Prima facie*, present differences relate to matters which are covered by agreement and therefore can legitimately be

1 V K Krishna Menon Papers, N M M L

regarded as differences of interpretation. In our view political difficulties of this kind are not likely to be resolved by too legalistic an approach; they require, for their solution, a spirit of conciliation and compromise. If negotiations between two parties have failed to yield results, resort to arbitration by a third party is surely a better method of reaching a satisfactory settlement than resorting to force with all its dangerous consequences. We feel therefore that this method should be recommended to the Dutch. If desirability of arbitration is accepted it shall be possible to devise steps to secure the agreement of both parties to resort to this method of settlement.

3. We are not quite clear as to whether reported breakdown of negotiations results from failure to agree on a joint *gendarmierie*. If this should be the only cause of difference we would strongly support the suggestion of H.M.G. for setting up of a Police Commission of neutral experts. In our view considerations of national prestige ought not to be allowed to stand in the way of acceptance of such an eminently reasonable suggestion.

## 5. Cable to Lord Listowel<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
22 July 1947

Our telegram 5652 of July 18th<sup>2</sup> Indonesia In view of outbreak of hostilities there we have decided that our point of view should be presented orally to representatives of H.M.G. in United Kingdom. We have therefore instructed Krishna Menon to see you and also the Foreign Secretary. We shall be grateful if you will arrange for Krishna Menon to see Mr. Bevin as soon as possible (the urgency of the situation makes this necessary) and for any support that you can give him.

2. Our telegrams 5308 of 8th July and 5652 of 18th July contained all the background and we should like copies of these to be handed over to Krishna Menon.

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N M M L

2 See the preceding item.

**6. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
22 July 1947

Your most immediate telegram 1435 of July 22nd.<sup>2</sup> Indonesia. You should call on Mr. Bevin and inform him that starting of hostilities by Dutch, in particular the bombing of towns, has come to us as a climactic shock. Prolongation of conflict is likely to threaten the peace of whole of South East Asia and to hamper the economic recovery of world by paralysing economic recovery of Indonesia. We therefore strongly urge His Majesty's Government to use their utmost endeavour to bring about an immediate cessation of hostilities and to have dispute between Dutch and Indonesians referred to arbitration by a third party. Even if Dutch should have denounced Linggadjati agreement, reference of dispute to arbitration can be justified on its merits. If Dutch will not listen to reason and stop hostilities and accept percentage, His Majesty's Government should consider immediate reference of whole background to Security Council This would seem to be permissible under Article No. 34<sup>3</sup> read with Article No. 35<sup>4</sup> of Charter of United Nations.

*Paragraph 2.* We hope very much that H.M.G. will see their way to accept the suggestions made in preceding paragraph. These are a com-

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

2 Krishna Menon asked Nehru whether he should meet any British minister and convey India's concern about the situation in Indonesia and offer India's help, or he should meet Van Boetzelaer at The Hague and make representations showing India's interest in maintaining peace in Asia, or on his (Nehru's) behalf he should discuss with H.M.G. immediate action to prevent development of conflict endangering peace in Asia and if desired discuss possibilities of raising matter immediately in the Security Council. He also asked Nehru if he could discuss with H.M.G. the possibility and desirability of issuing some public statement either "parallel or jointly with H.M.G." expressing India's concern and desire for peaceful solution and imperative necessity for arbitration invoking clauses of the Dutch-Indonesian agreement.

3 Article 34: The Security Council may investigate any dispute, or any situation which might lead to international friction or give rise to a dispute, in order to determine whether the continuance of the dispute or situation is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security.

4 Article 35: 1. Any member of the United Nations may bring any dispute, or any situation of the nature referred to in Article 34, to the attention of the Security Council or of the General Assembly

2 A State which is not a Member of the United Nations may bring to the attention of the Security Council or the General Assembly any dispute to which it is a party if it accepts in advance, for the purposes of the dispute, the obligations of pacific settlement provided in the present Charter. . .



bination of (one) and (three) of your telegram under reply. If they are unable to do so we shall in all probability decide to take matter to United Nations ourselves. Should H.M.G. see their way to act on line suggested by us we would of course be happy to associate ourselves with any *demarches* that they may make.

*Paragraph 3.* We are quite willing to associate ourselves with H.M.G. in a public statement expressing our concern over latest developments and our desire for a peaceful solution by resorting to arbitration. Naturally, if H.M.G. find themselves unable to take action on the line suggested by us, we shall have to adjust our publicity to such a decision as we may, in that eventuality, decide to take. Meanwhile we are issuing a short statement expressing our anxiety over resumption of hostilities and our earnest hope that every effort will be made to terminate them and to substitute for the use of force conciliation and compromise.

*Paragraph 4.* India Office are being asked to give you every facility to interview Mr. Bevin and to give you copies of our telegrams Nos. 5308 dated July 8th 1947 and 5652 dated July 18th which contain texts of representations that we have already made to H.M.G. Representations on the lines of paragraphs one and two of present telegram are being made to U.S. Government through their Ambassador in New Delhi.

*Paragraph 5.* Text of our telegram to Secretary of State for India is repeated in immediately following telegram. I would suggest that you see Lord Listowel first and communicate to him substance of your instructions. Please also inform him of line of our approach to American Ambassador in New Delhi.

## 7. On Dutch Aggression in Indonesia<sup>1</sup>

The sudden attack by the Dutch in Indonesia<sup>2</sup> is an astounding thing

1. Statement to the press, New Delhi, 24 July 1947. *The Hindu*, 26 July 1947.
2. The Dutch Government gave to the U.N. as reasons for 'police measures' the Indonesian Republic's unwillingness or inability to implement the Lingardjati agreement, violation of the truce, acts of force throughout the Archipelago, senseless destruction of valuable property, food blockade and the taking of hostages. The Dutch Prime Minister, on 20 July 1947, ordered a full-scale attack to crush the Indonesian Republic.

which the new spirit of Asia will not tolerate. Apart from the merits of the case, no European country, whatever it might be, has any business to use its army in Asia. Foreign armies functioning on Asian soil are themselves an outrage to Asian sentiment. The fact that they are bombing defenceless people is a scandalous thing. If other members of the United Nations tolerate this or remain inactive, then the United Nations Organisation ceases to be.

So far as India is concerned, we will give every possible help.

## 8. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
25 July 1947

Your most immediate telegram No. 1489 dated July 24th. I have not so far heard anything from you regarding steps that H.M.G. may have decided to take in respect of conflict now raging in Indonesia.<sup>2</sup> I have however received today from Listowel a telegram (repeated in my immediately succeeding telegram) which says that, in reply to offer of good offices made to Netherlands Government by H.M.G. on July 22nd, the Netherlands Government have taken note of offer and added that it would depend on developments whether and if so when they (the Dutch) would consider it opportune to make another appeal to friendly United States of America and British Governments.

*Paragraph 2.* Meantime Shahrir has arrived as representative of President of Indonesian Republic and has brought me letters both from President and from Premier. According to these communications the Dutch Air Force without warning and while Republic delegates were still at Djakarta (Batavia) bombed Republic air fields causing wanton destruction and hardship. My conversation with Shahrir confirms impressions which we had formed from press and other reports that so-called police action by Dutch is an extirpation and long prepared military campaign whose real purpose is to inflict complete military defeat on Republic and thus prepare way for a political settlement entirely favourable to Dutch.

1 V K Krishna Menon Papers, NMML

2 Krishna Menon had informed Nehru that he had met Listowel and Bevin and concluded that H M G, whose final decision would be known the next day, had been seized of the urgency and importance of the problem in Indonesia and that active steps were being taken to obtain cessation of that unhappy situation there.

While offer of H.M.G. to mediate may have been satisfactory at one time, in view of Dutch reply and in particular the progress of Dutch forces it is impossible for us to be satisfied with it now. No one in India or anywhere in Asia will believe that if Governments of United Kingdom and of U.S.A. really desired to bring this conflict to an end, they could not do it immediately without military intervention. Holland's economic as well as political dependence on these two countries is such that its Government could not afford to forfeit their goodwill and support by a refusal to end hostilities and reach a settlement with Indonesians by peaceful means. In our view the time for formal offers of mediation is past. I would add in parenthesis that Mr. Bevin's refusal to commit himself on the subject of supply of equipment and facilities to the Dutch is hardly calculated to persuade the Dutch to take offer of mediation by H.M.G. seriously <sup>3</sup>

*Paragraph 3.* It is for H.M.G. to determine what positive action they can take to bring about an immediate end to this conflict. But if H.M.G. are unable to take effective action to end hostilities and restore. <sup>4</sup> of dispute to a peaceful plan, we shall have no option but to take the matter before United Nations Security Council. In our view if H.M.G. wish to avoid what they consider to be inconveniences of this course it is up to them to devise means which would render recourse to Security Council unnecessary. We should have thought that in view of tactics adopted by Dutch, H.M.G. would spontaneously have <sup>5</sup> aid of United Nations. That organisation obviously exists to exert itself in cause of peace if other methods to preserve peace fail. It would be impossible for us to induce public opinion in India to accept view that our efforts to persuade H.M.G. to induce the Dutch to resort to arbitration having failed we could do nothing but to watch the Dutch prosecute their military campaign to a successful end.

*Paragraph 4* The U.S.A. Ambassador to whom representations on the lines of your instructions were made the day before yesterday has not yet had a reply from his Government. We propose to approach him again in order to emphasise urgency of situation and verify need for immediate and more effective action. I hope that you will impress upon H.M.G. what we propose to impress upon U.S.A. Ambassador, namely, that failure for whatever reason of foreign policy of two Great Powers to

3. On 21 July 1947, the British Foreign Office announced that it had offered, in consultation with the United States Government, its services to both sides to help in ending the dispute.

4 & 5 Omission in the source

intervene effectively in cause of peace and on side of a people struggling for their freedom cannot but create most unfortunate impression in India and in all Asian countries.

*Paragraph 5.* If case should go to Security Council it is our intention that you should present it on our behalf. You may wish to make provisional passage arrangements to meet this contingency.

#### **9. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
26 July 1947

Reference para 3 of my most immediate telegram No 5892 dated July 25th<sup>2</sup>

2 We are informed that Security Council will recess from August 12th. If therefore the case has to be referred to Security Council this must be done within the next two or three days I hope you will make this clear to H.M.G. and say that we should like an answer to our various suggestions by the 28th or 29th at least. Meanwhile (this is for your information) we are preparing the case for the U.N. Security Council.

1. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No. 114-  
FEA/47, Vol I, Sr No. 69/corr, National Archives of India
- 2 See the preceding item

#### **10. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
28th July 1947

Your telegram 1518 of 26th July. You should by now have received my No. 5892 of 25th July.<sup>2</sup> Speed of Dutch military operations presages

- 1 V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N M M L
- 2 See *ante*, item 8

collapse of Indonesian organised resistance in matter of days and it is most unlikely that Dutch Government will pay any heed to United Kingdom-United States of America mediation after their immediate military objectives have been attained. Personally I must express profound disappointment at slowness with which these two Great Powers have handled a situation of great urgency and grave international importance. Even though appeal to United Nations may bring no immediate relief to hard-pressed Indonesians, it will rouse moral conscience of the world I have to consider mounting pressure of public opinion in India and in Asia and can no longer delay approach to United Nations under Article 35 of Charter. We shall lodge our complaint with Secretary General or President of Security Council on Tuesday the 29th July unless Anglo-American mediation proves fruitful before that date. Tomorrow (5 p.m. Indian standard time) I shall hold press conference at which I shall explain action taken by us so far and prepare press for our next step. Please inform His Majesty's Government We shall inform U.S. Ambassador.

*Paragraph 2.* Dutch Government is now operating five air services to Batavia *via* Karachi and Calcutta every week These are not civilian services and can be terminated by us under agreement made in 1945. Details of agreement will be telegraphed to Secretary of State tomorrow. We have decided to inform Dutch charge d'affaires in New Delhi tomorrow of our decision to stop these services.

## 11. The War in Indonesia<sup>1</sup>

India has been and is specially interested in the freedom of the peoples of Asia The recent Asian Conference held in Delhi was a symbol not

<sup>1</sup> Interview to the press, New Delhi, 28 July 1947 *The Hindu*, 30 July 1947

only of the resurgence of Asia, but also of the cooperation of the different countries of Asia, for peace and freedom. Asia, having suffered greatly in the past from foreign domination and exploitation, is determined to end it. Any attack on the freedom of the people in any part of Asia affects the rest of this great continent. The mere presence of a colonial regime or of foreign troops in any Asian country is an insult and a challenge to Asia. It is also a danger to peace. An attempt to continue colonialism will not only endanger peace but will also come in the way of economic recovery the world over. Even the rich and powerful countries of the world cannot prosper unless Asia prospers and has advancing standards.

The Government of India have followed with the closest interest events in Indonesia. Last year the people of India were greatly touched by the offer of rice from the Indonesian Republic at a time when many in India were starving.<sup>2</sup> They looked with the fullest sympathy on the struggle for freedom and independence of the Indonesian Republic.

Soon after the Linggadjati Agreement, the United Kingdom gave *de facto* recognition to the Indonesian Republic.<sup>3</sup> The Government of India did likewise<sup>4</sup> and it was hoped to develop close relations between India and Indonesia. That agreement was delayed for many months by the Dutch authorities. However, when it came, it was welcomed as a step towards world peace and ending of colonialism. That agreement contained a specific clause for arbitration.<sup>5</sup> Since then there have been many minor disputes about the agreement.

Three weeks ago, when these disputes seemed to take a dangerous turn,<sup>6</sup> the Government of India addressed the United Kingdom on the subject and asked them to endeavour to prevent any conflict. The United States of America were also informed of this. Since then, the Government of India have been constantly drawing the attention of the United Kingdom and the United States of America to the dangerous developments that

2 An agreement for the supply of 700,000 tons of paddy to India in return for Indian consumer goods was signed on 27 July 1946

3. British *de facto* recognition of the Indonesian Republican Government was announced on 31 March 1947.

4 On 29 May 1947.

5. Article 17 (b). The Netherlands Government and the Government of the Republic shall settle by arbitration any dispute which might arise from this Agreement, and which cannot be solved by joint consultation in a conference between those delegations.

6 Differences of opinion arose especially regarding the composition and voting procedure of the proposed federal Government, the question of a joint Dutch-Indonesian police, and the restoration of Dutch property and plantations

were taking place in Indonesia and suggesting arbitration or some other methods of solving the difficulty

In any event, it has been pointed out that there should be no armed warfare or hostilities which might endanger the peace of South East Asia and possibly the world. But the Dutch Government have paid no attention to such appeals. Instead, they seem to have carried on negotiations with the Indonesians at the point of the bayonet, giving repeated ultimatums. That surely is not the way to carry on any negotiation and no self-respecting country could tolerate it. Nevertheless, the Indonesian Republic tried patiently to meet every point raised by the Dutch and accepted most of their demands in order to avoid a conflict. Only one matter remained<sup>7</sup> and this was being discussed when the Dutch ended all negotiations and immediately started hostilities. With hardly any notice, the whole war machine was set in motion and air attacks were made all over the islands and a number of cities were bombed. The offer of the Indonesians to submit the dispute to arbitration in terms of the Linggadjati Agreement had been rejected by the Dutch who were evidently eager to start warlike operations.

During all these past weeks, the contrast between the patience and spirit of conciliation of the Indonesians on the one hand and the tactics of the Dutch on the other has been most marked. What is called police action is a well-organised war with bombing of towns on a large scale. The Indonesian Republic has no means of meeting these air attacks either from the air or from the ground. It is thus a very simple affair to bomb defenceless people and kill them.

Apart from the horror of this sudden attack, vital questions of principle are raised. Can any country be allowed to indulge in aggression of this type and to refuse arbitration? Even if there had been no Linggadjati Agreement with its reference to arbitration, still arbitration must be an essential preliminary before any aggressive action is taken. If any Power can act, as it chooses, in such matters, then there is no purpose left for the United Nations. It will have no prestige or authority and is bound to fade away.

The Government of India are intensely interested in the preservation of peace in the world and in the realisation of freedom by all people who at present lack it. In pursuance of this policy, they adhered to the United Nations and associated themselves with the United Nations

7. On 17 July A. K. Gani, first Vice-Premier in the Sharifoeddin Cabinet, announced in reply to the Dutch ultimatum of 10 July demanding "satisfaction at short notice" that the proposed inclusion of Dutch troops in the security forces for Java and Sumatra remained unacceptable. All other points of the Linggadjati Agreement under dispute were accepted by the Republic.

Charter. They have believed, and still believe, that without world co-operation it will not be possible to promote peace, freedom or progress in the world. The alternative to this world cooperation is conflict and war on a vast scale.

The United Nations offered the basis for this cooperation and is at present the only organisation which can possibly achieve it. People all over the world have, therefore, looked towards the United Nations with hope, though sometimes this hope is tempered by misgivings. The old League of Nations failed because it had no effective sanctions behind it and because it had no machinery for quick decision or action. Profiting by that example, the United Nations Organisation has established some machinery for rapid decision, the Security Council, and has aimed at having effective sanctions.

The League of Nations failed because it allowed aggression to take place without any attempt to check it. At first there were relatively petty aggressions as at Corfu, then followed major aggressions in Manchuria and in Abyssinia.<sup>8</sup> Some feeble steps were taken in regard to these, but they made little difference. Spain followed with the so-called non-intervention policy.<sup>9</sup> All these local wars led up to the Second World War.

If we are to profit by past errors and mistakes, we must avoid them. Or else we shall have the same cycle of a succession of petty conflicts, leading to a major catastrophe. The United Nations, therefore, as well as all the members of the United Nations, can only remain passive, when any aggression takes place, even at a distance from them, at their peril and at the peril of the world. It is essential, therefore, for us to be vigilant and to nip trouble in the bud before it becomes too widespread to be controlled.

The conscience of the world has been deeply stirred by events in Indonesia, for they foreshadow the ending of the world structure which

8. In 1923 Greece appealed to the League when Mussolini issued an ultimatum demanding an indemnity of 50 million lira following the murder in Corfu of some Italian members of a Greece-Albania border commission. Mussolini threatened resignation from the League and did not withdraw from Corfu till the indemnity had been paid. In 1932 the League condemned Japan's attack upon China in Manchuria. In retaliation Japan left the League. In 1935 the League tried to protect Abyssinia from an attack by Italy. Italy left the League which was unable to go beyond limited economic sanctions.
9. The setting up of a Non-Intervention Committee by France and Britain during the Spanish civil war of 1936 to minimise the danger of international conflict had the practical effect of depriving the Republic of its international rights as a legally constituted Government to buy arms whereas the Nationalists enjoyed the advantage of troops and military supplies from Italy and Germany.



the United Nations have sought to build. The consequences of this are terrible to contemplate. This is not the time for bickering amongst big or small Powers, but for a joint effort to put an end immediately to this brutal method of gaining political objectives. Aggression and the use of force and violence to settle political problems must be ruled out. If force has to be used, only the United Nations should be permitted to use it for the common good. The alternative to this is a common peril and a common destruction.

The people of Asia may not today be strong enough to resist successfully foreign aggression. But they are not very weak either and they have means and resources at their disposal to combat aggression. It can be said with certainty that no such aggression will succeed in the long run. In the short run it may well lead to great misery.

It is essential, therefore, for hostilities in Indonesia to end immediately and for the *status quo* previous to the aggression to be established. Any change brought about by the aggression of a country over another must not be recognised. It is necessary for the United Nations to take heed of this challenge to its Charter and to world peace and move with speed to meet it.

So far as I know, some efforts were also made by other countries to check the Netherlands Government and the Dutch people from taking military action in Indonesia. I do not know the details of that, but I believe the U.K., the U.S.A. and Australia were considerably interested and efforts were made before the outbreak of hostilities and immediately after, but none of them has so far succeeded. You know that we have at the present moment a very eminent and august personality here in Delhi, Dr Shahrir, ex-Prime Minister of the Indonesian Republic, and at present the official representative of the President of the Republic<sup>10</sup>. So he is here not only in a non-official capacity but officially representing the Republic. He brought to me letters from President Soekarno and Prime Minister Amir Sharifoeddin. He has been of help to us in understanding the position in Indonesia, although the main outlines were clear enough. We have, naturally, assured him of our fullest sympathy both as a Government and as a people. Sympathy was inevitable, but, quite apart from the merits of the case—and the merits are considerable also—the real question for any Government or people to consider is this larger question of military action and aggression by any nation against another

10 Shahrir was entrusted by President Soekarno with the mission of visiting overseas countries with a view to securing all possible help for Indonesia. He escaped from Java on 22 July and arrived in India on 24 July 1947.

without reference to any international organisation or to arbitration, because once you admit that, then there is no check left.

Who is to judge the merits? The nation that attacks? Obviously, that is not good, but it is only the nation that attacks that becomes the judge in such cases. Therefore, this raises a very vital international issue connected with world peace.

I pay a tribute to the very gallant Indian airman who brought Dr. Shahrir from Indonesia to Delhi.<sup>11</sup> He has been known to us for a number of years not only for his great efficiency in flying but also for his adventurous and daring spirit. I believe that he is not an exception among our pilots and airmen. There are many amongst them who have that efficiency and that daring, and it is good for India that we should have such young men

Question: Was the question of severance of diplomatic relations considered?

Jawaharlal Nehru: No. Because the immediate issue before us is, first of all, how to stop hostilities. Secondly—and it is allied to it—how to take the matter to the United Nations Organisation. Other steps might follow. The severance of diplomatic relations may be a fine gesture, but what we want at the present moment is to achieve something and not merely make a gesture.

The Government of India had been thinking of moving the U.N. right from the first day, but thought that the proper way, and the more profitable way, to do so was in conjunction with other Powers, notably the U.K. and the U.S.A. We immediately put ourselves in communication with them with that purpose in view. We have also been in touch with Australia with regard to this matter, and during the last few days numerous communications have passed between us. Now we have arrived at a stage when, apart from formal and informal approaches we have made to various countries, we propose within a few hours, if nothing happens, to make a formal approach to the United Nations.<sup>12</sup>

Q: What exactly do you mean when you say, "If nothing happens"?

JN: Obviously, if some step is taken to stop hostilities, we think afresh.

11. Bijoyanand Patnaik (b 1916); pilot and industrialist, Chief Minister, Orissa, 1961-63; Union Minister for Steel and Mines, 1977-79 and for Steel, Mines and Coal, 1979-January 1980

12 On 30 July, India and Australia took the Indonesian case to the UN Security Council

Q: Could you say that the response you got from the U.K. and the U.S.A. was sympathetic?

JN: Certainly. Such steps are taken after due intimation to other Governments. One functions, as far as possible, in cooperation with other Governments and, therefore, we have to give intimation to other Governments whom we wish to join in such a step and some time has to be given for that. Therefore, we propose to take this step tomorrow morning. So far as we are concerned we have decided to make this formal reference to the United Nations Organisation.

The Government have taken a decision to terminate almost immediately, may be tomorrow, the Dutch air services flying over India. You might have heard that about three or four months ago a civil air agreement was arrived at between the Netherlands Government and the Government of India.<sup>13</sup> As a matter of fact, that agreement has not been given effect to yet. But a temporary agreement was entered into soon after the war ended in 1945. It is under that temporary agreement that the Dutch Government-owned aircraft fly across India. We are going to put an end to that temporary agreement of 1945. The other agreement has not started going yet and before it starts, we will be informed about it and then we shall consider the question.

Q: Will the Government of India consider stopping harbour facilities for Dutch ships?

JN: The question has not arisen before us. We are prepared to consider that but it has not arisen before us.

Q: Will the Government propose to take up this question with Ceylon?

JN: We can certainly inform the Ceylonese Government and express the hope that they will also help in this. As a matter of fact, I am not quite clear how far the authority of the Ceylonese Government at the present moment extends. Probably, the Colonial Office in London will have a big say in the matter.

Q. Do you think that this step against Dutch air traffic will have any real effect on what is going on in Indonesia?

JN: Not a real effect in the military sense, because obviously the action

13. An air transport agreement between India and the Netherlands was signed in New Delhi on 31 May 1947.

that has taken place there was carefully planned and prepared for months ahead. But it is something which does come in the way of their communications with their homeland and in that sense it interferes. I am sure air traffic did take big guns and things like that. It might have taken, possibly, military personnel, that is, officers.

Q: Will a similar ban be imposed on other air services passing through India if they carry any kind of supplies to the Dutch Government for its hostilities?

JN: A ban can be imposed, certainly, but it is not very easy to check it, unless there is very great scrutiny of each plane.

Q: Are you acting in consultation with the Governor-General-designate of Pakistan?

JN: We have kept the representatives of the prospective Government of Pakistan in touch with all developments and have consulted them wherever it was necessary. Of course, generally speaking they are in complete sympathy with our approach. They are not functioning as a Government and in some matters it is rather difficult to deal with them as a Government. Nevertheless, we approached them and we have no doubt that they will agree with any action that we might take <sup>14</sup>

Q: Will the Pakistan Government also apply the same sanctions?

JN: We have been in touch with the Pakistan authorities on this issue. I have no doubt that they will agree.

As regards the communications between the Government of India and the U.K. and the U.S.A., I would mention that they agreed that it would be desirable to stop hostilities as soon as possible and that they would do their best towards that end.

Q: In other words, you have the full cooperation of those Governments.

JN: It is a little difficult to say, but there is general agreement, I believe, that hostilities can be stopped; in what manner exactly they are envisaging to do it, it is difficult for me to say. I think it is correct to say that this Dutch military action in Indonesia has shocked not only

<sup>14</sup> Liaquat Ali Khan declared on 30 July that Pakistan fully supported the Indian stand on the Indonesian question and would also not permit Dutch aircraft to land or use any facilities in Pakistan.

the so-called liberal elements in other countries, but even others who normally might not have much sympathy for the colonial peoples.

Q: Is the Government of India in touch with the Dutch Government representative here?

JN: The Dutch representative left some weeks ago and a new Ambassador is expected <sup>15</sup> So, there are no senior men representing the Dutch Government at this time, but they are kept informed of our views and possible activities. The Government will certainly inform the Dutch Ambassador when he arrives here of the steps we have taken.

Q: Will the matter be referred to the Security Council straightway or the U.N. General Assembly which will meet in September?

JN: There is no point in waiting. The whole object of reference is that there should be an immediate meeting of the Security Council, may be within four or five days or a week of the reference. The Security Council is supposed to be in permanent session.

Both from the Indonesian point of view as well as from the larger world point of view, the only effective step at the present moment is to raise the matter before the U.N. We propose to do that.

Q: Have you considered the question of sending direct military aid to Indonesia?

JN: No. And we do not propose to consider that.

Q: Do the Government of India propose to accord *de jure* recognition to the Indonesian Republic?

JN: I have stated that we gave *de facto* recognition. Not only we, but some other countries have also done so because that represented the actual state of affairs at the time. We did so in consultation with the Indonesian Republic. You must remember that there is a certain limit to action being taken unless one is prepared to go to war. Normally, a country does not rush into war because it feels strongly about a question. Going to war is a very serious matter. Going to war, apart from being a serious matter, puts an end to all the other methods. People talk very loosely, therefore, of our sending military help etc. to Indonesia. It would make in the military sense not the slightest difference to anybody.

15. The appointment of A. T. H. Lamping as Dutch ambassador to India was announced on 14 July 1947.

unless it was on a very big scale, which is a very difficult matter. We are not at war with the Dutch Government and do not propose to be at war with the Dutch Government or with any other nation and the fact that we might accord *de jure* recognition to the Indonesian Republic will have no meaning or relation to facts. We followed the Linggadjati Agreement when we gave *de facto* recognition. The Indonesians themselves under that agreement had acknowledged a certain *de jure* sovereignty of the Queen of the Netherlands. We could hardly go beyond what the Indonesians themselves have done. What the future holds I do not know. But it would serve no purpose at all except a vague flourishing in the air for us to say that we recognise *de jure* the Indonesian Republic.

Q: Will the Government consider the question of sending medical help in view of the urgent request made by the Indonesian Government?

JN: That, certainly, is a matter which can be considered,<sup>16</sup> but it is not an easy matter to organise these things at the present moment. We have given some thought to it, and in the state of affairs prevailing in Java at the present moment, it is not quite clear where to send the medical help and how to use it. One has to find out, but it is a thing which we are considering and if we do not succeed or the U.N. does not succeed in putting an end to hostilities very soon, undoubtedly further steps will be taken to give them medical help etc.

Q: Will India supply arms to Indonesia?

JN: For any Government to give arms to another Government is tantamount to declaring war or to be on the eve of war. We do not propose to declare war for various reasons, because we do not think that is going to help either the Indonesians or ourselves on anybody.

Q: Will the Government take steps to see that private Dutch purchasing agencies or the Dutch Trade Commissioner in Bombay do not purchase goods in the Indian market which they can use against the Indonesians?

JN: We will enquire how far they are purchasing goods here.

16 In response to an appeal from the Indonesian Red Cross, an Indian Medical Mission led by Dr. P.L. Nurulla and carrying 7,000 pounds of medical supplies left on 23 August 1947.

Q: What do you intend to do in case of disturbances in Burma?

JN: It is not our business, of course, to interfere in the internal politics of any other country but things happen sometimes which transcend the boundaries of internal politics and in which other countries must of necessity take interest, especially a country like India in relation to Burma.

I met General Aung San a dozen years ago when the latter was President of the Students' Union in Rangoon and subsequently at the Ramgarh Congress.<sup>17</sup> It is really a tremendous tragedy that a person from whom not only Burma but all of us hoped so much should have been suddenly done to death. Most countries that have been involved in national struggle for freedom are apt to become rather narrow-minded. General Aung San, however, succeeded in rising above that narrow-mindedness and had considerable vision. Apart from this, the manner of his murder, that is, the use of these purely gangster methods is an abomination and everyone must condemn it.

17. Arung San was at the Congress session at Ramgarh held in March 1940 and brought a message from the Burmese people

## 12. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
29th July 1947

Your most immediate telegram 1591 July 29th. I confess that Bevin's reply<sup>2</sup> is not very hopeful. Nevertheless in compliance with his request we have abruptly postponed our approach to United Nations Security Council until tomorrow July 30th. Text of our communication to Council which is repeated in my immediately following telegram will be telegraphed to New York at noon tomorrow July 30th Indian Standard Time.

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. At a meeting with Krishna Menon on 28 July 1947, Ernest Bevin reiterated the earlier stand of the British Government and said that they had decided to stop supplies to the Netherlands and discontinue all contracts and agreements with them. He requested the Indian Government to postpone reference to the Security Council for at least twenty-four hours while Britain made a final appeal to the Dutch. He declined to condemn the gains made by the Dutch in Indonesia during the action as it involved juridical issues of Dutch sovereignty.

### 13. Cable to President of Security Council<sup>1</sup>

29th July, 1947

I have the honour on behalf of the Government of India to draw attention of the Security Council under Article 35(1) of United Nations Charter to the situation in Indonesia.

During the last few days Dutch forces have embarked without warning on large-scale military action against Indonesian people. Attacks began without warning at time when a delegation from Indonesian Republican Government was actually in Batavia for negotiations with Dutch authorities on implementation of Linggadjati Agreement. In opinion of Government of India this situation endangers maintenance of international peace and security which is covered by Article 34 of Charter. Government of India therefore request Security Council to take necessary measures provided by Charter to put an end to present situation.

The Government of India earnestly hope that in view of its urgency the Council will consider this matter as soon as possible.<sup>2</sup>

Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *National Herald*, 1 August 1947

2. The Security Council adopted a resolution on 1 August 1947 calling on both sides to cease hostilities immediately.

### 14. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi

30 July 1947

My telegram 6008. Please arrange to leave for New York as soon as possible

We are instructing Indian delegation New York to inform Secretary General that you will present our case

2 Please telegraph repeating to Indiadef New York date and time you expect to arrive there

1. V K Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.



**15. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
31 July 1947

Dr. Shahrir is proceeding to New York at earliest opportunity to assist you in presenting case to Security Council

1. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No 114-FEA/47, Vol 1, Sr No 96/corr, National Archives of India.

**16. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
31 July 1947

Your telegram 1620 dated 30th July.<sup>2</sup> *Paragraph No. 1.* Paragraphs 3,<sup>3</sup> 4<sup>4</sup> and 9.<sup>5</sup> As you will have observed from our communication to Chairman, Security Council, we have referred the case under Article 34 and . . . of the Charter, that is under Chapter VI. Not being member of Council, it was not possible for us to take any action under Chapter VII. However since we have requested the Security Council to take the necessary measures provided by Charter to put an end to present situation, the Council is competent to take action under Chapter VII, if it so decides. Our approach to Council, therefore, conforms to views of His Majesty's Government; at the same time it does not preclude action by Council under Chapter VII. As regards paragraph No. 14<sup>7</sup> of your telegram, we

- 1 V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N M M L
- 2 In this cable Krishna Menon reproduced, in paragraphs 2-4, H M G's reply to Nehru's cable of 29 July
3. Paragraph 3 read "H M G however expresses the opinion that there is a stronger case for bringing up this matter under chapter six rather than under chapter seven we (H M G) also happen to know the view of the US Government that they consider it is the more appropriate course to bring up this matter under chapter six rather than seven. ."
- 4 Paragraph 4 read "We (H M G) shall not make it difficult and our attitude in Security Council would be that we shall not take any action which would prevent a recommendation put forward being heard and considered."
- 5 Paragraph 9 read "The opinion expressed by H M G in Paragraph 3 may be considered on its own merits. It may be possible to make our application in such a way as to avail ourselves of both chapters but it would be an error of tactics to exclude the capacity to invoke chapter six. This is a matter for your expert advisers"
- 6 Omission in the source
- 7 Paragraph 14 read "In the assembly vaster volume of sympathy for Indonesia would be aroused and we would probably carry it before the end of the session while at Security Council it may well be prolonged especially if the Americans wish to do so"

are definitely of the opinion that an immediate appeal to world opinion, even on a narrower platform, is preferable to an appeal to the broader forum of United Nations Assembly which will not meet for another six weeks. World opinion will be extremely critical of such delay and tactically it is important to strike while communication iron is hot. It will of course be our endeavour, through our representative, to impress upon the Council the need for urgent action and avoidance of procedural details.

*Paragraph 2.* Paragraph No. 11.<sup>8</sup> I have already held a press conference here at which our attitude was fully explained. At this stage I do not consider any further statements to press to be necessary Paragraph 12.<sup>9</sup> It is for British people to organise aid to Indonesia in United Kingdom. If Indian community in London contemplate any such action, there could be no objection to your cooperating with them. The movement should however be purely unofficial. Since you will be proceeding to New York immediately you will hardly have the time to take part in any such move. Paragraph 13.<sup>10</sup> We shall of course keep in touch with His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom Paragraph 15.<sup>11</sup> Egypt is not member of Security Council any longer. Syria has taken her place.<sup>12</sup> It is unlikely that Syrian Minister in London will be able to do much. After you reach New York, you may informally contact the Syrian representative on the Security Council.<sup>13</sup>

*Paragraph 3.* We have been in close touch with the Australian High Commissioner for some time. As you must have learnt, Australia has taken

8 Paragraph 11 read "I would like instructions as to whether press interviews are to be given here on attitude of our Government and steps we are taking including our repeated efforts to obtain British participation in mediation and under what auspices such a conference if desired is to be called and who should speak to the press representatives."

9 Paragraph 12 read "I would like instructions as to whether I am to participate in promote or inspire any endeavours here by way of aid to Indonesia moral or material and whether such is to be by way ."

10 Paragraph 13 read "It is my submission that irrespective of the disappointing response from H M G. communications and representations should continue to be made by way of conveying information in the interests of Indonesians and of making proposals and demands"

11 Paragraph 15 read "Please instruct whether you wish me to see ministers of Egypt and Syria who are here as these countries have seats on Security Council You would no doubt be discussing the matter with Australian High Commissioner in New Delhi"

12 Syria was elected to the Security Council in place of Egypt on 19 November 1946 Egypt's term expired on 31 December 1946.

13 Fars-al-Khoury.

action under Chapter seven<sup>14</sup> of the Charter.

*Paragraph 4.* In conformity with our declared policy of nonalignment with either Western or Eastern Bloc I consider it especially important that as our spokesman in the Indonesian case you should avoid all appearance of leaning more for support to one side than to the other.

*Paragraph 5.* I would suggest that you should try to make your telegrams shorter to save time in transmission and in decyphering.

- 14 On 30 July 1947, the Australian Government brought the Indonesian situation to the attention of the Security Council under Article 39 of the U.N. Charter.

## 17. Cable to Asaf Ali<sup>1</sup>

3-8-47

Doctor Shahrir starting tomorrow from Bombay by T.W.A. arriving New York sixth August. Please inform his Indonesian friends. Shall be grateful if you will give him every help.

1. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No. 114-FEA/47, Vol. 1, Sir No. 113/corr, National Archives of India

## 18. Cable to Shahrir<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
9 August 1947

Indonesian issue was again discussed by Security Council on 8th and, possibly, also on the 9th. Since subject is still on Council agenda, it can come up for consideration again any day. I would therefore suggest that you should proceed to New York as soon as possible.

1. Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No. 114-FEA/47, Vol. I, Sr. No. 129/corr, National Archives of India

**19. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi

11 August 1947

More than a week has elapsed since Security Council called upon the Dutch and Indonesians to cease fire and settle their dispute by resort to kindly arbitration or other peaceful means

Fighting, the magnitude of which it is impossible to assess in the absence of independent information, still continues.

Whether any Dutch and Indonesians have accepted American offer of mediation there is no indication whether disputants are to get together and if so when and on what basis Our object which was immediate restoration of peace in Indonesia remains unfulfilled.

Articles in British press describing Indonesians as rebels and Dutch military action as legitimate for quelling rebellion<sup>2</sup> can hardly induce Netherlands Government to consider mediation seriously: in any case such publicity is having most unfortunate effect on public opinion here.

During discussion of Indonesian issue by Security Council on 7th our spokesman made two proposals (A) that Dutch forces should be withdrawn from positions held by them before commencement of hostilities This suggestion had also been made by him in course of first hearing by Council of Indonesians (B) that an international arbitration commission should be set up by Security Council to settle the dispute These suggestions will be pressed at next meeting of Security Council probably tomorrow. But outcome of our effort is uncertain.

It is clear that continuation of present situation is pregnant with same dangers which led us to take matter to Security Council

Could you throw some light on attitude and intentions of H.M.G. or ascertain what Americans are doing to make mediation effective If resolution of Security Council is not implemented within next few days the next step will be to ask for application of sanctions

We would be grateful for very early reply.

1 V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

2 In an editorial on 5 August 1947, the *London Times* accused the Jogjakarta regime of being "inefficient" and of ruling harshly. It called for a United Nations inquiry into the Republican Government's claim to represent the nationalist aspirations of Indonesia but thought that, since the Republican Government had formally acknowledged the sovereignty of the crown, the dispute was a domestic matter excluded from the purview of the Security Council.

## INDIA IN WORLD AFFAIRS

## III. Other Countries

## 1. Telegram to Aung San<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
7 June 1947

I send you and through you to the Constituent Assembly for Burma my greetings on the auspicious occasion of the meeting of that Assembly.<sup>2</sup> May it bring to Burma independence and a democratic people's constitution. I look forward to the closest friendship between an independent India and an independent Burma for their mutual advantage and for the good of Asia and humanity at large.

Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. The Burmese Constituent Assembly met on 10 June 1947 and it was inaugurated by the Finance Member Thakin Mya.

## 2. To B.C. Roy<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
20 June 1947

My dear Bidhan,

I have your letter of the 12th May or June.<sup>2</sup> The question you have raised is a deeper one than can be covered by change of phrasing. Undoubtedly a new phrasing would be better than the old.

2. The real problem is two-fold — one, the fact that there is very strong sentiment in India, as you well know, in favour of India being

1 J.N. Collection

2 In his letter, B C Roy mentioned that Lord Addison, the Dominion Secretary, suggested change of the expression "Dominion Status", which "connoted inferiority of Status", to "Association of British Commonwealth & other nations", which signified that India was free to associate with the British Commonwealth and was not an integral part of the British Commonwealth

a free and sovereign Republic; the second part of the problem is how far we should definitely associate ourselves in the world context today with a particular group of nations.

3. I have no doubt in my mind that the Objectives Resolution of the Constituent Assembly should be given effect to; that is, India should declare herself a free sovereign Republic. I myself feel that this must be done, but it is not a matter of how I feel but of what the country wants. Granting this, what can be our relations with the British Commonwealth? I am prepared to go far, for a number of reasons, to develop close relations of an independent India with the Commonwealth. There are many advantages in this both to us and the other parties concerned. How this can be done is not quite clear to me.

4. Of course, the Irish Republic is in a sense a member of the Commonwealth. To what extent, it is a little doubtful. As you yourself point out, the conception of the British Commonwealth is a developing one and presently the word "Dominion Status" may be changed. Ultimately it is a question of some kind of common citizenship or rather a dual citizenship. This matter can be investigated.

5. Legal approaches and suitable phraseology are important. But fundamentally the question is a different one and more psychological than political. You know the feeling in the country, and the recent declaration that we shall have Dominion Status for the interim period has rather upset many of our people. Any idea that it might extend beyond the interim period would create a furore.

6. For my part I am convinced that we must be completely independent in law and in fact in order, once for all to get rid of all conscious and subconscious ideas about British domination and intervention in India. Very much depends on the British Government's attitude towards Pakistan and the Indian States. If this attitude is at all shady or tends to encourage disruptive tendencies, our reactions will be strong.

7. Thus the questions you have put to me hardly arise at present except in a few people's minds. We are all at present rather hurt by this partition business and other developments, even though we have agreed to them. This is not the time to raise any other controversial issue.

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

P.S I do not know if you will get this in time before you leave England.

3. To J.C. Smuts<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
24 June 1947

Dear Field Marshal Smuts,

I thank you for your letter of June 18 in reply to mine of May 6.

In my last letter I requested the Union Government to accept the implementation of the resolution passed by the United Nations General Assembly on December 8, 1946<sup>2</sup> as the common and immediate purpose in which our respective Governments can cooperate for finding a basis for the solution of the problems with which our two Governments are concerned and added that as soon as the Union Government had acceded to this request a common basis for future discussions would be established. You would allow me to point out that although in your present letter the Union Government have insisted on the return of our High Commissioner<sup>3</sup> we have so far had no indication that they agree to proceed on the basis of the United Nations resolution. It still is our view that in the absence of an agreed basis for discussion the High Commissioner would not be able to achieve much. What is required is to agree first on the basis of discussion, and after that the channel of discussion can be settled without much difficulty.

The Government of India are firmly of the opinion that further discussions between our Governments, which they would warmly welcome, can only be on the basis of the United Nations resolution. They also feel that the issues involved are so highly important that these discussions could be brought to a satisfactory conclusion more expeditiously through a conference of fully accredited representatives of both Governments than through the High Commissioner. Nevertheless, should the Union Government accept the United Nations resolution as the basis of discussions the Government of India would, in deference to the wishes of the Union Government and as a mark of their earnest desire to

1 Printed in *National Herald*, 21 August 1947

2 See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 1, p 468

3. Smuts had in his letter of 18 June 1947 requested Nehru for the return of the Indian ambassador to South Africa; this was also being pressed by Indians there. He wrote that the Government was having negotiations over the grievances of Indians and many had been resolved. The severing of trade relations and unilateral trade sanctions were injuring South African interests. However, the Union Government had refrained from taking retaliatory action and he had publicly favoured the rise of India to her full status of freedom and sovereignty.



reach a friendly settlement, be prepared to send their High Commissioner to South Africa to initiate these discussions. They regret, however, that their last High Commissioner, Mr. Deshmukh, will not be available for this purpose.

There are other matters referred to in your letter on which I should like to put forward our point of view but would reserve this for a later occasion. My primary anxiety, like yours, is to see whether the present deadlock cannot be quickly and amicably resolved.

Before I conclude this letter I wish to express my appreciation of your friendly references to India's attainment of freedom.<sup>4</sup> The new India desires nothing more ardently than to work in a spirit of cooperation for the peace and prosperity of the world with all like-minded nations.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. In the same letter Smuts wrote to Nehru, "I have publicly welcomed this splendid achievement of Indian and British statesmanship and whole-heartedly given it such blessing on behalf of South Africa as I can"

#### 4. To Sudhir Ghosh<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
25th June 1947

My dear Sudhir,

I have your letter of the 18th June.<sup>2</sup> I entirely agree with you that every opportunity should be seized for a proper presentation of India's case. This is certainly desirable in regard to the sterling balances question. I have consulted other people here, including Sir Chintaman Deshmukh of the Reserve Bank, and they all like the idea. Lokanathan<sup>3</sup> is certainly a suitable person to put India's case.

1. Sudhir Ghosh Papers, N M M L
2. In this letter, Ghosh said that the question of India's sterling balances was being discussed in Britain by various interested parties and much confusion was being caused by the British press. Brailsford, Leonard Elmhurst, Listowel and others had asked him to provide an Indian of outstanding ability who would be prepared to expound the Indian case at a public discussion.
3. P.S. Lokanathan (1894-1972), Editor, *Eastern Economist*, 1943-47; Executive Secretary, E.C.A.F.E., Bangkok, 1947-56.

I have telegraphed to you today to this effect and we are informing Lokanathan also. You can fix up a suitable date with him.

In your letter you mention that Robertson<sup>4</sup> and Crowther<sup>5</sup> will present the British case. Is it not necessary for Lokanathan to have some associate with him? I do not know of a suitable Indian in England who might do this. As I have mentioned in my telegram to you, G.D.H. Cole<sup>6</sup> and A.C. Gilpin<sup>7</sup> might perhaps help in this matter.

I do not know when the B.B.C. intend to have this debate and when the other functions you mention will take place. It does not really much matter what date is fixed, though it might be preferable to have it just at the time when this question is likely to be discussed, but if this discussion is delayed then these public debates can take place at any time. Even so, it would be desirable to present India's case again later.

I rather like the issue of *Indian News* that you have sent me.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

- 4 Dennis Holme Robertson (1890-1963), a distinguished economist.
- 5 Geoffrey Crowther (1907-1972), Editor of *The Economist*, 1938-56.
- 6 George Douglas Howard Cole (1889-1959), Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, 1912-19, Fellow of University College, Oxford, and University Reader in Economics, 1925-44, Chichele Professor of Social and Political Theory and Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, 1944-57, President of the Fabian Society since 1952; regular contributor to the *New Statesman and Nation*.
- 7 Author of *India's Sterling Balances* (London, 1946).

## 5. To Mrs. Paul Robeson<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
26 June 1947

My dear Essie,

It was a great pleasure to have your letter of April 5th. Thank you also for the newspaper clippings you sent me.<sup>2</sup>

Somehow life is so complicated that it is difficult to keep in touch with one's friends. But I often think of you and Paul and I wonder when both of you will come to India as promised long ago. I fear you will find India rather slow with your extreme vitality. But with all our slowness we are also on the move and perhaps the tempo might increase.

1 J.N. Collection

2 Mrs Paul Robeson sent to Nehru press clippings dealing with India, so as to give him some idea as to how the American press treated the Indian situation

The Asian Conference here was a very great success.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately most of us in our respective countries have got so tied up with our own problems that we have not been able to follow it up as we should have done. By the time the next session is held in China much will have happened.<sup>4</sup> Surely you are not going to delay your visit to the East till then.

There is not the least chance in the world for me to go to America on a lecture tour.<sup>5</sup> It is possible that I might pay a short visit though not soon. But the very idea of a lecture tour terrifies me. I just don't want to be ordered and dragged about to lecture.

My sister, Nan, is going to Moscow next month as our Ambassador. It is a tough job, but that is just why I have chosen her for it. There is just a possibility of her going to the U.N. General Assembly meeting in September/October.

I shall look forward to your new book *Congo Journey*.<sup>6</sup>

With all good wishes to you, Paul and Pauli.

Yours as ever,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 2, pp. 501-523.

4. Mrs. Paul Robeson expressed her desire to attend the second Asian Relations Conference to be held in China after two years as she could not attend the first Asian Relations Conference held in Delhi.

5. She wrote that there were rumours from time to time that Nehru would be going to the United States to lecture. "That would certainly be sensational," she added.

6. At this time she was writing a book on Africa entitled *Congo Journey*, which she hoped to finish "by the end of summer".

## 6. Free India Desires Closer Ties with the United States<sup>1</sup>

It gives me great pleasure to convey to you and through you to your Government the greetings of the Government and the people of India on the occasion of the American Independence Day. The celebrations this year are of particular significance to the people of my country who will soon be celebrating their own independence. With the dawn of freedom

1. Message to Henry Francis Grady, American ambassador in New Delhi, on the occasion of the celebration of the American Independence Day on 4 July. Printed in *The Hindustan Times*, 4 July 1947.

India hopes that the ties of the two countries will be closer than ever before so that together and in full cooperation with other members of the United Nations they can strive for the lasting peace, security and happiness of humanity.

## 7. To Terence Shone<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
8th July 1947

My dear Sir Terence,

I received your letter of the 27th June and immediately referred the matter to Mr. Rajagopalachari. Enquiries were made and I understand that Mr. Rajagopalachari is writing to you on this subject.

I have not got exact figures yet, but I understand that we might be able to meet H.M.G.'s wishes to a large extent in the matter of Decauville Track.<sup>2</sup> I need hardly say that we are anxious to help in this business, not only because of our desire to assist, in so far as we can, for the reconstruction of the blitzed houses in England, but also because we would greatly welcome satisfactory trade agreements between the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union. In the present state of political tension in the world such agreements will no doubt have a salutary effect.

I trust you will convey to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom our assurances that we shall do our utmost to help in this matter.<sup>3</sup>

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Ministry of External Affairs, File No 7-94/47-OS V p. 6/corr., National Archives of India

2. Narrow gauge railway track

3. In his letter of 6 August, Terence Shone thanked Nehru and Rajagopalachari for their "very helpful attitude over the question of making available to His Majesty's Government surplus Decauville track in connection with the negotiations which were then being carried on in Moscow between His Majesty's Government and the Soviet Union for a mutual trade agreement".

## 8. Henry Grady's Record of Interview with Nehru<sup>1</sup>

A-146. *Section I* Reference my tel No. 500, July 7, re Nehru's expression of opinion that Afghanistan's agitation re N.W.F.P. probably represented effort to divert attention from domestic difficulties; and his criticism of India Bill—particularly with regard to provisions affecting position of States.

In course of same conversation Nehru made following additional points:

I. India's foreign policy based on desire avoid involvement with any particular bloc, to refrain from meddling, and to avoid war. India desired friendly relations with U.S.

While there was some fear in India of U.S. economic penetration, India would want U.S. exports—particularly capital goods. In fact U.S. was only country from which quantities needed could be obtained. Need to conserve dollars to import food necessitated cutting down imports of consumer goods. India would probably apply to International Bank for loan.

2. While U.S.S.R. had in past held considerable attraction for Indians internal troubles of India now such interest in U.S.S.R. had declined. Present interest more in Asiatic Russia than in European since conditions in former furnished Indians better clue to progress. International ideological conflicts currently less important to Indians than domestic problems.

3. Indian economy would probably tend to follow trend of British economy under socialist government. Certain large industries would probably be nationalized; large proportion of business and industrial activity would remain in private hands.

*Section II* While in recent weeks Nehru has shown strain imposed by official duties and remarkably large number of receptions, etc., he seemed on this occasion unusually calm and rational, and did not talk, as on some occasions, in somewhat superficial or detached manner.

<sup>1</sup> Grady's cable to the Secretary of State, New Delhi, 9 July 1947 *Foreign Relations of the United States 1947*, Vol III, pp 160/61.

Re Afghanistan, mentioned in connection with Hare's<sup>2</sup> itinerary, Nehru did not elaborate, but remarks reflected his support of policy indicated by letters No. 465, July 1 and No. 505, July 9—namely to make it clear to Afghans G.O.I. strongly opposed to separation of N.W.F.P., whether from Hindustan or Pakistan.

References to U.S.S.R. seemed indicate a wary attitude—no whole-hearted admiration. Remarks re U.S. seemed genuinely friendly.

2. Raymond Arthur Hare (b. 1901), American diplomat, Chief, Division of Middle East, Indian and South Asian Affairs, 1947; Deputy Director, Office of Near East and African Affairs, 1948, ambassador to several countries from 1950-65; Assistant Secretary of State (Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs), 1965-66, President, Middle East Institute, 1966-69, its National Chairman, 1969-76, and Chairman, Emeritus, since 1976

## 9. To Albert Einstein<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
11 July 1947

My dear Professor Einstein,

I received your letter of June 13th 1947 some little time back and I read it with the care and attention which it deserved. It is a privilege and an honour to be addressed by you and I was happy to receive your letter, though the subject of your letter is a sad one.

I appreciate very much what you say about the recent decision of India's Constituent Assembly to abolish untouchability.<sup>2</sup> This indeed has been our policy for many years past and it is a matter of deep satisfaction to us that what we have been trying to do in many ways will soon have the sanction of law, as embodied in the constitution, behind it. You say very rightly that the degradation of any group of human beings is a degradation of the civilisation that has produced it. Ever since Mahatma Gandhi began to play a role in Indian politics and social affairs, he has laid the greatest stress on the complete liquidation of untouchability and all that goes with it. He made it part of our freedom struggle and emphasised that it was folly to talk of political freedom when social freedom was denied or restricted for a large number of persons.

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. The Constituent Assembly of India declared unlawful the practice of untouchability on 29 April 1947.

You know that in India there has been the deepest sympathy for the great sufferings of the Jewish people. We have rejected completely the racial doctrine which the Nazis and the fascists proclaimed. Unfortunately, however, that doctrine is still believed in and acted upon by other people. You are no doubt aware of the treatment accorded by the Union of South Africa to Indians there on racial grounds. We made this an issue in the United Nations General Assembly last year and achieved a measure of success there. In raising this question before the United Nations we did not emphasise the limited aspect of it, but stood on the broader plane of human rights for all in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

What has happened in recent years, more especially since the rise to power of Hitler in Germany, was followed by us with deep pain and anxiety. You are quite right in thinking that India has mourned the horrors which resulted in the death of millions of Jews in the murder machines which were set up in Germany and elsewhere. That was terrible enough, but it was still more terrible to contemplate a civilisation which, in spite of its proud achievements, could produce this horror.

I need not assure you, therefore, of our deepest sympathy for the Jews and for all they have undergone during these past years. If we can help them in any way I hope and trust that India will not merely stand by and look on. As you know, national policies are unfortunately essentially selfish policies. Each country thinks of its own interest first and then of other interests. If it so happens that some international policy fits in with the national policy of the country, then that nation uses brave language about international betterment. But as soon as that international policy seems to run counter to national interests or selfishness, then a host of reasons are found not to follow that international policy.

We in India, engrossed as we have been in our struggle for freedom and in our domestic difficulties, have been unable to play any effective part in world affairs. The coming months, and possibly years, will not free us from these grave problems of our own country; but I have no doubt that we shall play a progressively more important part in international affairs. What that part will be in future I can only guess. I earnestly hope that we shall continue to adhere to the idealism which has guided our struggle for freedom. But we have seen often enough idealism followed by something far less noble, and so it would be folly for me to prophesy what the future holds for us. All we can do is to try our utmost to keep up standards of moral conduct both in our domestic affairs and in the international sphere.

The problem of Palestine, you will no doubt agree with me, is extraordinarily difficult and intricate. Where rights come into conflict it is

not an easy matter to decide. With all our sympathy for the Jews we must and do feel that the rights and future of the Arabs are involved in this question. You have yourself framed the question: "Can Jewish need, no matter how acute, be met without the infringement of the vital rights of others?" Your answer to this question is in the affirmative. Broadly put, many may agree with you in that answer, but when we come to the specific application of this answer, the matter is not at all simple.

But, legalities apart and even apart from the many other issues involved, we have to face a certain existing situation. I do not myself see how this problem can be resolved by violence and conflict on one side or the other. Even if such violence and conflict achieve certain ends for the moment, they must necessarily be temporary. I do earnestly hope that some kind of an agreement might be arrived at between the Arabs and the Jews. I do not think even an outside power can impose its will for long or enforce some new arrangement against the will of the parties concerned.

I confess that while I have a very great deal of sympathy for the Jews I feel sympathy for the Arabs also in their predicament. In any event, the whole issue has become one of high emotion and deep passion on both sides. Unless men are big enough on either side to find a solution which is just and generally agreeable to the parties concerned, I see no effective solution for the present.

I have paid a good deal of attention to this problem of Palestine and have read books and pamphlets on the subject issued on either side; yet I cannot say that I know all about it, or that I am competent to pass a final opinion as to what should be done. I know that the Jews have done a wonderful piece of work in Palestine and have raised the standards of the people there, but one question troubles me. After all these remarkable achievements, why have they failed to gain the goodwill of the Arabs? Why do they want to compel the Arabs to submit against their will to certain demands? The way of approach has been one which does not lead to a settlement, but rather to the continuation of the conflict. I have no doubt that the fault is not confined to one party but that all have erred. I think also that the chief difficulty has been the continuation of British rule in Palestine. We know, to our cost, that when a third party dominates, it is exceedingly difficult for the others to settle their differences, even when that third party has good intentions, — and third parties seldom have such intentions!

It is difficult for me to argue this question with you who knows so much more than I do. I have only indicated to you some of my own difficulties in the matter. But whatever those difficulties might be, I would



assure you, with all earnestness, that I would like to do all in my power to help the Jewish people in their distress, in so far as I can do so, without injuring other people.

The world is in a sorry mess and the appetite for war and destruction has not been satisfied yet. Here in India we stand on the verge of independence for which we have struggled for so long, and yet there is no joy in this country at this turning point in our history and there will be no celebrations of this historic event next month, for we are full of sorrow for what has happened in our country during the past year and for the cutting away of a part from the parent country. This was not how we had envisaged our freedom. What is most distressing is the background of all these events, the bitterness, the hatred and violence that have disfigured the face of India in recent months. We have a terribly hard task before us, but we shall face it, of course, with the confidence that we shall overcome these difficulties, as we have overcome others in the past.

I have shared your letter with Mahatma Gandhi and some other friends.

With regards,

Yours very sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

#### 10. To C.R. Attlee<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
11th July 1947

My dear Prime Minister,

V.K. Krishna Menon is returning to England and I am asking him to carry this note with him and to convey my greetings to you. He has been in intimate touch with us during the past few weeks here and I think he might prove helpful in explaining the situation here.

In view of the impending changes the post of High Commissioner for India in London has an added significance. We attach considerable importance to it as we do to the future relations of India with the U.K. We have therefore given a great deal of thought to the choice of a suitable person for this post. In consultation with the Viceroy and my colleagues we have decided to appoint Krishna Menon to this post. I feel sure that with his knowledge of both India and England and the intimate contacts he has in both countries, he will be of great help to us in the new

1. *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol 12, pp 110-111.

conditions that we shall have to face. I trust that he will receive all possible help from your Government.

We do not propose to make any announcement about Krishna Menon's appointment till early in August. This is just for your personal information.

We are going to have plenty of difficulties in the future, but I earnestly trust that this future will see a growing friendship between India and England.

Yours very sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 11. Quatorze Juillet<sup>1</sup>

I have great pleasure in conveying to you and through you to your Government the greetings of the Government and the people of India on this day of your national rejoicing. As India approaches her freedom and independence, July 14 gains a new meaning for her people. Both France and India are symbols of human values and I have every hope that in the years to come there will be the closest friendship and co-operation between them.

1. Message to the French charge d'affaires, New Delhi, 13 July 1947, to mark the celebration of the French Independence Day *National Herald*, 14 July 1947

## 12. Cable to Emmanuel Celler<sup>1</sup>

Our instructions to Sir Abdur Rahman emphasise the quasi-judicial character of the inquiry and lay special stress on complete impartiality. I am communicating a copy of your telegram<sup>2</sup> to him. Best wishes.

- 1 18 July 1947 *The Hindu*, 20 July 1947.

Emmanuel Celler (1888-1981), American politician and Democrat, member, US House of Representatives, since 1923, Chairman, Judiciary Committee

- 2 Celler's cable said that Abdur Rahman had shown "his prejudice and hostility almost to the point of insult to the Jewish point of view"

### 13. Death of Aung San<sup>1</sup>

I have learnt with deep grief of the terrible tragedy that took place this morning in Rangoon when a number of gangsters pushed their way into a room where the Executive Council was meeting and shot down General Aung San and a number of other Members of the Council. This cold-blooded murder of Burmese popular leaders at a time when they were on the eve of their independence is tragic beyond words. I mourn for Aung San, friend and comrade, who even in his youth had become the architect of Burmese freedom and the acknowledged leader of her people. I mourn also for his comrades who are dead. I mourn for Burma bereft at this critical moment of her chosen leaders, and I mourn for Asia who has lost one of her bravest and most far-seeing sons.

This tragedy is a reminder to us of the horrors and disasters that violence and indiscipline bring in their train. They are the enemies of freedom and their offspring are chaos and misery. We in India have passed through terrible days full of violence and atrocity. Let each one of us search his heart and reflect on where this leads to. India and Burma and Asia indulge in violence at the peril of their freedom. All our fair dreams will vanish if we cannot pull ourselves up and think straight and act straight at this critical moment in our history. Above all we have to put an end to all indiscipline and act together and in an organised way to face all anti-social elements and put an end to their activities. This is no time for legal quibbling or for personal rivalry. The present faces us both with its tragedy and difficulty and its hope for the future. It is in this present that we must act if we are to have any future worth living for.

To the people of Burma I offer sincerest sympathy on my behalf and on behalf of the people of India. India will stand by them in the difficult days ahead.

1. Statement to the press, New Delhi, 19 July 1947. *The Hindustan Times*, 20 July 1947.

**14. Cable to Thakin Nu<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
20th July 1947

On behalf of Government of India and myself I convey to you, to your Government and to the Burmese people our deep grief at the tragedy which took place yesterday. We share this great sorrow with you at the assassination of General Aung San, the brave and wise leader of Burma, and the other leaders at a critical moment in your history. We share with you also the determination to face all difficulties with courage. We shall gladly offer you such help as we can at this moment of crisis.

- 1 Department of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No 30-43/OS II, p 5/corr, National Archives of India

**15. On the Assassination of Aung San<sup>1</sup>**

Please accept our deepest sympathy in your great sorrow and the sorrow of the Burmese nation, which we all share. I have lost a friend and a comrade and Burma and Asia have lost one to whom everyone looked with hope for the future

- 1 Message of condolence to Mrs Aung San, New Delhi, 20 July 1947 Department of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No 30-43/OS II, p 5/corr, National Archives of India.

**16. To Ahmad Qavam<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
2 August 1947

Your Highness,<sup>2</sup>

My sister, Mrs. V.L. Pandit, who is proceeding to Moscow as our

- 1 External Affairs Department File No 18(4)-IA/47, Sr. No 4, National Archives of India  
2 Ahmad Qavam was several times Prime Minister of Iran and was overthrown by Dr Mossadeq in 1952. He died on 23 July 1955 at the age of 80

Ambassador to the U.S.S.R., will make a brief halt in Teheran. I understand from your Consul General, Mr. Motamedy, that, during her stay in your Capital, she will be the guest of the Iranian Government. I wish to thank you for the hospitality of your Government and also to take this opportunity to convey to you the greetings and good wishes of the Government and the people of India.

During the Asian Relations Conference which was held in Delhi last March, it gave me great pleasure to meet the members of the Iranian delegation. For centuries, Iran and India have been friends and have influenced each other's culture. It is the wish of my Government that the amicable relations which now exist between our two countries should be maintained and promoted. For this purpose, we should very much like that India and Iran should exchange Ambassadors. I shall be happy to receive, in due course, an expression of the views of your Highness' Government on this subject.

I am, with assurances of the highest consideration,

Yours very sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 17. To J.C. Smuts<sup>1</sup>

7 August 1947

Dear Field Marshal Smuts,

I have received your telegram of July 28. You regard my request to accept the implementation of the resolution passed by the United Nations General Assembly on December 8 as a request that the Union Government must admit that they have broken the agreement between the two Governments and violated the principles of the Charter. You add that your Government are not even sure what agreements and principles are referred to.<sup>2</sup> I should have thought that the prolonged debates in the ap-

1. *National Herald*, 21 August 1947.

2. In his cable of 28 July Smuts had written "They (the Union Government) have broken no agreements and violated no principles of the Charter. They are not even sure what agreements and principles are referred to as their request for an advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice on the matter has been refused."



SIGNING AN AIR AGREEMENT BETWEEN INDIA AND FRANCE, 16 JULY 1947



WITH HENRY GRADY, UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR, 27 JUNE 1947

propriate committees of the General Assembly last year and the Assembly's decisions had made the purport of the resolution perfectly clear. However, you seem to regard the resolution as uncertain and obscure and its adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations as the result of discussion in a 'highly charged emotional atmosphere'.<sup>3</sup> I confess my inability to see how the return of India's High Commissioner to the Union can help to resolve the matters which, in your opinion, the Assembly and its committees left obscure and uncertain. I have tried my best to end the deadlock between our two Governments, but must observe, with regret, that, through no fault of ours, no common basis for negotiations between us has been found

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

- 3 In the same cable Smuts wrote "In view of the vagueness and generality of the charges against the Union and the highly charged emotional atmosphere in which they were discussed the Union Government must be specially on their guard against complying with your request and accepting the so-called implications of the resolution referred to"

## 18. Cable to C.R. Attlee<sup>1</sup>

On behalf of my colleagues in the Government of India and myself I wish to express our grateful thanks for your message of greeting<sup>2</sup> on this historic day when India emerges into freedom. That freedom means much to us, but it also means much to Asia and the world. We hope to utilise that freedom for the advancement of our own people as well as for the furtherance of the peace and prosperity of the world. In these great tasks we shall look forward to the closest cooperation with your Government.

1 11 August 1947 *The Transfer of Power 1942-7*, Vol. 12, p. 724

2 Attlee's message read "My colleagues in the United Kingdom Government join with me in sending on this historic day greetings and good wishes to the Government and the people of India. It is our earnest wish that India may go forward in tranquillity and prosperity and in so doing contribute to the peace and prosperity of the world". Similar messages were received from many other heads of state and government and replied to in similar terms.





## 1. Cable to Aung San<sup>1</sup>

16 June 1947

This morning's papers published Reuter's message from Rangoon about promulgation of Emergency Immigration Act<sup>2</sup> by Burma Government on the 14th June. This has come as surprise and disappointment to me. My Government had already sent its detailed comments on the original Bill and suggested that the Bill should not be enacted in advance of an immigration agreement between India and Burma. Such agreement has always been contemplated. I am sorry to see that our suggestions and comments on this important matter have not been accepted by your Government. I consider present time most inopportune for passing an Immigration Act in such a hurried manner. I hope you will look into this matter and find it possible to postpone enforcement of legislation until we have had chance to enter into discussion with regard to an immigration agreement.

Jawaharlal Nehru

- 1 Ministry of External Affairs, File No 18-2/47-OS II, p 5/corr., National Archives of India
- 2 This Act disallowed the entry into Burma of any persons "without either a passport fully visaed by or on behalf of the Government of Burma or an immigration permit issued by the controller of immigration". British subjects domiciled in the United Kingdom were exempted from this regulation

## 2. To S. Somasundaram<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
7 July 1947

My dear Somasundaram,<sup>2</sup>

I have received your letter addressed to Upadhyaya, together with the letter of Mr Siva Subramaniam<sup>3</sup>. I am passing this to Commonwealth

- 1 Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, File No 68-3/47-OS V, p 15/corr., National Archives of India
- 2 S Somasundaram was a proctor and notary in Colombo
- 3 Siva Subramaniam, a resident of Colombo, wrote on 23 June 1947 that the Tamils of Ceylon should join the other Ceylonese in working the new constitution, contesting the coming general elections on non-communal lines and in dissuading communal organisations from sponsoring candidates. He also said that the Tamils should seek non-communal backing

Relations Department.

While it is our duty to protect Indian interests in Ceylon, I am quite clear in my mind that we should do nothing of a communal nature, nor should we come in the way of the development of Ceylon and her people. We should rally ourselves with their attempts for greater freedom and independence. Exactly what we should do is a matter for detailed consideration. The attitude of the Ceylon Government has not been promising at all, but for the moment we are not raising this question because of other preoccupations; but, undoubtedly, we shall have to do so. Meanwhile we must in no way function as a group coming in the way of Ceylon's advance

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 3. Message from Free India<sup>1</sup>

Today is a fateful moment in history for India, for all Asia, indeed for the entire world. After long years of suffering and sacrifice India attains her freedom and independence. A new star rises, the star of freedom, in the East. A new hope fills the world.

On this day of liberation the motherland sends her affectionate greetings to her children abroad. She calls them to her service and to the service of freedom wherever they might be. Every Indian abroad is a representative of India and must ever remember that he has the honour of his country in his keeping. That is a proud privilege and responsibility. None of India's children, wherever they be, may submit to anything which is against national self-respect or against the cause of freedom. They must preserve their own freedom at all costs and respect the freedom of others. *Jai Hind.*

1. New Delhi, 11 August 1947. Printed in *The Hindu*, 15 August 1947.

#### 4. Greetings to "Indian Opinion"<sup>1</sup>

On the occasion of the establishment of Indian independence we think specially of Mahatma Gandhi under whose inspiration we have worked for so long. We think also of his early struggles in South Africa for maintaining the honour and self-respect of our people there. This great movement which he started in South Africa blossomed and has borne fruit in India. So I send my greetings to *Indian Opinion* founded by Gandhiji and through it to our fellow countrymen in South Africa.

1. Message sent on 12 August 1947 J.N Papers, N.M.M.L.



## FOREIGN POSSESSIONS IN INDIA

**1. To O.P. Ramaswami Reddiar<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
23rd June 1947

My dear Mr. Reddiar,

I have your letter of June 14th.<sup>2</sup> We have received no proposals from the French Government about their settlements in India. All that has happened is that I have had some talks with the French Ambassador here and the French Governor of Pondicherry. Our policy obviously is for the union of these parts with the rest of India, though we are quite agreeable to French cultural associations to continue. If there are any particular facts in your knowledge, we shall be glad to have them.

As for appointing representatives, there is no proposal at present. Normally, representatives are appointed from our Foreign Service which is being recruited. Any suggestions that you may have to make will be welcome

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 215-PS/46-PMS.
2. Reddiar feared that the authorities of the French settlements in India were trying to maintain their hold under some pretext or other. He wished to be consulted in the matter of negotiations over the settlements as also in the appointment of India's representatives in these areas.

**2. The Future of the French and Portuguese Settlements<sup>1</sup>**

Of course we should send a chargé to Paris as soon as possible for a number of reasons.<sup>2</sup> The fate of French India is, however, ultimately going

1. Note, 27 June 1947, External Affairs Department File No 26(26)-X/47, pp. 6-7/n, National Archives of India.
2. G S. Bajpai, in his note of 26 June 1947, had drawn Nehru's attention to a conversation between the French Governor of Pondicherry and the British Consul General in which the former was of the view that India was likely to be further divided after the British departure. Bajpai suggested the need to have at least a charge d'affaires in Paris to correct such mischievous trends

to be decided in India or rather by developments in India. M. Baron agreed with me that it was inevitable that Pondicherry should and must join the Indian Union. There was no other alternative. What he pressed for was some cultural privileges for France there. I had no objection to this (if they could be arranged) provided politically French India was absorbed into the Indian Union. Col Fletcher's need not therefore be afraid of Pondicherry becoming the base of a foreign power.<sup>4</sup>

I think it is highly likely that soon after August 1947 the Government of India will put forward formal proposals in regard to French and Portuguese India. These must inevitably mean the absorption of these areas into India. At the most they might involve some kind of popular referendum. Col Fletcher and Mr. Baig<sup>5</sup> might well prepare the ground for this. The fact that Pondicherry might get some kind of self-government is not likely to make much difference.

3 Edward Walter Fletcher (1899-1958); joined Indian Political Service 1928, Consul General at the French establishments in India, 1945-47.

4 Reporting on 11 June 1947 on his conversation with Baron, the French Governor, Fletcher suspected that France intended to derive benefits other than purely cultural ones by seeking to make Pondicherry a centre of French culture while keeping it within the French Union, and thought that if Baron's views prevailed French India would presumably obtain local autonomy and the status of a dominion within the French Union.

5 M.R.A. Baig, Indian Consul in Goa.

### 3. Agitation in the French Possessions<sup>1</sup>

Mons Roux, the French Ambassador, came to see me this morning to convey an urgent message he had received from Mons. Bidault.

He told me that the French Government was somewhat exercised about developments in Pondicherry and Chandernagore, more especially the latter place. There was an agitation going on there to do something aggressive on August 15th. He very much hoped that untoward incidents will be avoided, as these will add to the difficulties of the situation.

<sup>1</sup> Note, 8 August 1947. External Affairs Department File No. 26(26)-X/47, pp. 13-14, National Archives of India.



The French Government were very actively and urgently considering the future of the French possessions in India. They had decided to hand over almost immediately the French loges to the Government of India without any further argument. They had also decided to grant extensive financial and administrative powers to the municipalities in the French possessions in India. These municipalities would thus have a great deal of autonomy in the future. Further the French Government themselves were going to have elected members to the Councils in Pondicherry, Chandernagore, etc.

All these were looked upon as a first step. They proposed to take other and more far-reaching steps in the near future, but they could not indicate their exact nature at the present moment. But they wished to assure us that it was their desire that all these matters should be settled amicably between the French Government and the Government of India and in accordance with the wishes of the people in French India. They felt sure that their final decisions would be in accord with the wishes of the people in the French possessions and the Government of India. In view, however, of parliamentary procedure, they could not declare anything at present.

For the present, therefore, no publicity could be given to the steps they were taking, except to the fact that they were handing over the loges free.

I asked him for something specific in writing about this, so that there might be no misunderstanding. He said that he would immediately communicate with his Government to get the precise formula. He was anxious that publicity should be given to the question of the loges as early as possible, as he hoped that this might have a good effect in India.

I informed Mons. Roux that the Government of India were themselves desirous of settling all these matters relating to the French possessions in a friendly way and in accordance with the wishes of the people of the French possessions. As regards the agitation in Chandernagore,<sup>2</sup> it is very difficult, and indeed hardly possible, for us to do anything in the matter. There were all manner of groups in Bengal and we could not control them. Indeed, we were having plenty of trouble in some parts of Bengal and in the coal and steel areas from various groups. Even the so-called Congress group in Chandernagore was in no way organisationally connected with the Indian National Congress. Although they use the name of Congress they were an independent group somewhat in sympathy with

2 Kamal Prosad Ghosh, the mayor of Chandernagore, declared on 4 August that "Chandernagore forms an integral part of Bengal and has every right to break its links with imperialist France." A general strike had been threatened and a hartal proclaimed but withdrawn after the release of about 100 persons who had been arrested.

the ideals of the National Congress, but functioning entirely separately. So far as we were concerned, we did not want any untoward happenings in Chandernagore or Pondicherry.

Mons. Roux was specially concerned with the report that it was the intention of some people in Chandernagore to haul down the French flag. This, he said, would create a bad impression in France. I agreed and said that we would not like any disrespect to be shown to the French flag. It was not clear to me however what I could do in the matter, except possibly to give private advice to some private individuals, if they came to me; I was not in touch with them.

The position thus is that Mons. Roux will communicate with his Government and ask them for a precise formula about the French loges. He will communicate this to us and we can give immediate publicity to it, preferably before the 15th August. If the French Government are agreeable we might also state that the whole future of the French possessions is under active consideration of the French Government and they hope to settle it in accordance with the wishes of the people concerned. But we should only state what the French Government itself is agreeable to, lest there should be some misunderstanding in the future.



1. To C.H. Bhabha<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
20th June 1947

My dear Bhabha,

I understand that Mr. W.L. Voorduin<sup>2</sup> of the Central Technical Power Board is leaving India in two or three months on the completion of his present contract. I do not know the details of his work, but I gather that he is a person with exceptional experience and qualifications and is held in considerable esteem in America. Under the new conditions we shall have to implement our river development projects with as much vigour as possible. Even if we succeed in getting a substitute from abroad he is not likely to have the background which Voorduin has now. I suggest that it might be a good thing if you could endeavour to persuade Voorduin to stay for a further term. You could perhaps explain that we are anxious to make the maximum use of all the technical talent which we have at our disposal and that before long there will be large opportunities for large-scale effort in various directions.

I was telling Khosla the other day that as soon as we settle down to new conditions, that is in August next or so, we must proceed with our development plans at express speed. Money certainly will not be allowed to come in the way if the project is a productive one. It is thus especially necessary to hold on to really good men. Voorduin with his experience of T.V.A. is particularly useful and it would be a great pity to lose him.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 File No 17(8)/47-PMS

2 Member-in-charge of hydro-electricity, Central Technical Power Board, 1944-47

2. To C. Rajagopalachari<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
26 June 1947

My dear Rajaji,

Some days ago J C. Ghosh<sup>2</sup> of the Bangalore Institute came to see me and he talked about certain eminent German scientists who are available in Germany and who might be very useful in India. I am not particularly in favour of importing scientists or others from abroad, unless there is special need for them. Still, I think that a man of eminence in the scientific or technical field should be welcomed by us and should prove extraordinarily helpful. I understand that some department, probably the Education Department, has appointed a commission to rove about Europe and America in search of scientific and technical men. I dislike this idea of a commission going in this way and spending months and months over the process. More particularly, I think that we should not go to America for any such men as Americans are frightfully expensive. England is almost out of the question, because they cannot spare any first-class men and it is no good getting second-class men. For other reasons also I should imagine that it is not desirable just at present to go in search of scientists in England.

In effect, the only real field left to us is Germany and Austria, and, possibly, Scandinavia. The real pick of the German and Austrian scientists has probably been taken away by the United States of America and other countries. Still, I understand that some very good men are available at relatively small salaries. I think it will be worthwhile exploring this matter in Germany and Austria, but I am entirely opposed to a roving commission for Europe and America.

Ghosh told me that he was probably going to Europe on some committee or other business and that Bhatnagar might also go. I suggested that during their visit to Europe they might specially try to meet some of the available German scientists. Personal interviews are far better than any other method. The point is that a person is not engaged vaguely for scientific work but for a particular job or aspect of work that is needed here.

1 File No 17(8)/47-PMS

2 Jnan Chandra Ghosh (1894-1959), Professor of Chemistry, Dacca University, 1921-39; Director, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, 1939-47; Director, Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, 1950-54, Vice-Chancellor, University of Calcutta, 1954-55, General President, Indian Science Congress, 1939, member, Indian scientific mission to UK and USA., 1944-45, member, Planning Commission, 1955-59

I spoke in these terms to Bhatnagar also, but subsequently. I felt that Bhatnagar's absence from India at this stage might not be desirable. We are very much in the formative stage and we might and indeed are likely to require Bhatnagar here for consultations in regard to many matters. I feel, therefore, that it would not be desirable for Bhatnagar to go now. He should stay on till the changeover in August and later, if necessary, we can consider his going. It is obvious that in the new set up we have immediately to think in terms of pushing our various scientific and planning projects through. We shall have to work then at break-neck speed. In making this set-up Bhatnagar's advice is likely to prove very helpful. Not only as an individual, but as representing his department, I hope, therefore, that it will be possible for him to stay on here.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

I am informed that I was wrong in thinking that some kind of a roving commission was going to be sent to Europe and America. Only Ghosh and Sen Gupta<sup>3</sup> are going to Europe. To that I have no objection.

3. Manoranjan Sen Gupta (b 1903); a noted engineer and member of the education panel of the Planning Commission.

### 3. To C.H. Bhabha<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
28th June 1947

My dear Bhabha,

Thank you for your letter of the 27th about Voorduin.<sup>2</sup> I must say that the demands he made were formidable and I would hesitate to accede to all of them. Anyway the matter is in your hands and I have no doubt that you will fix up what is best in the circumstances.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 17(8)/47-PMS.

2. In his letter of 27 January 1947 Bhabha had written that Voorduin had agreed for a further term of service in India provided the new agreement was on a monthly basis with a monthly fee of Rs 10,000/- in addition to the payments under the old contract.

## MISCELLANEOUS

## 1. To Akbar Hydari<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
6 June 1947

My dear Hydari,

Eleven years ago I went to Assam and I heard the story of the Naga girl popularly called Rani Gaidilieu.<sup>2</sup> She had been in prison for six or seven years then. I have been greatly interested in her ever since then. I understand that a year or two ago she was released from prison and allowed to live somewhere under some restrictions.

I hope you will look into her case and be able to give her complete freedom. It seems to me rather extraordinary that a young girl, whatever her original offence, should be made to spend sixteen years in jail or in some kind of detention and should even now not be allowed her freedom. I do hope you will be able to release her completely.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J N. Collection.

2. See *Selected Works*, Vol 8, pp 501-502

## 2. To Kishen Prasad Dar<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
26 June 1947

My dear Kishenji,

I have spoken and written to you several times about my little book *Letters from a Father to His Daughter*. I think it is fantastic that this book should not be available for the public either in English or Hindi or Urdu. In other language editions it is so available. If you cannot arrange to bring out suitable editions for the public in these three languages, I propose to make other arrangements. You mentioned to me once that the contract with the Oxford University Press came in the way of any other publisher issuing this book. I do not think it comes in the way as that contract deals with the special school edition. Anyway you can make this clear to the Oxford University Press. If there is any difficulty, the sooner this contract is ended the better.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J N. Papers, N.M.M.L.



### 3. To N.S. Hardikar<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
26 June 1947

My dear Hardikar,

I have your letter of the 24th June.<sup>2</sup> I did not know that you had been put in charge of the Congress Seva Dal work. I am glad to learn that you have undertaken this responsibility. I shall gladly help you in so far as I can. I fear, however, that at present I can offer you little advice in the matter. I think we have delayed far too long in organising this important work. Still it is better late than never. In view of the changing circumstances, however, I am unable to give any effective advice. Perhaps a little later I might be able to do so

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 N S Hardikar Papers, N M.M.L.

2 Hardikar, who was entrusted with the task of reorganising the Congress Seva Dal after the resignation of Shah Nawaz Khan from this body, sought Nehru's views on running a volunteer organisation under the changed circumstances.

### 4. To Rukmini Devi<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
26 June 1947

Dear Rukmini Devi,<sup>2</sup>

I have your letter. I am afraid it is wholly beyond my capacity to find time to write anything worthwhile for the memorial volume you are producing for Dr. Annie Besant. But I cannot refrain from paying a brief tribute to her. This is given below<sup>3</sup>

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 J.N. Papers, N M.M.L.

2 Rukmini Devi (b 1904), married G S Arundale, 1920, actively connected with the management of the Besant Theosophical High School, Madras, since its foundation in 1934; founded Kalakshetra, a cultural organisation, in Madras in 1935, nominated member of Rajya Sabha, 1952-64, received Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for dancing in 1957, President, Kalakshetra

3 See the succeeding item

## 5. Annie Besant<sup>1</sup>

One of the outstanding events in my life is the day when I first met Annie Besant. I was twelve then and both her personality, the legends that already surrounded her heroic career, and her oratory overwhelmed me. With a young boy's admiration and devotion I gazed at her and followed her about. Then came a gap of many years during which period I hardly saw her; but that admiration continued for a great and unique personality. Long years afterwards I again came into intimate contact with her in the political field and again I became a devoted admirer.

It has been a very great privilege for me to have known her and to have worked with her to some extent, for undoubtedly she was a dominating figure of the age. India especially owes a very deep debt of gratitude for all she did to enable her to find her own soul.

1. Enclosure to Nehru's letter to Rukmini Devi, 26 June 1947 JN Papers, N.M.M.L.

## 6. To Sri Prakasa<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
28 June 1947

My dear Prakasa,

I received your letter of June 19th from Kathmandu as also the previous letter regarding Krishnaji<sup>2</sup> and the *Herald*

I am very sorry to learn that your companion<sup>3</sup> on the Nepal mission did not play up and tried to function on his own.<sup>4</sup> This was most objectionable. However, I hope that your visit there will do some good. I should like to discuss this with you when we meet.

1. JN. Collection
2. A businessman of Lucknow
3. The reference is probably to R U Singh
4. Sri Prakasa, accompanied by legal experts, Raghunath Singh and R U. Singh, had gone to Nepal to help the Reforms Committee in its task of suggesting changes in the administration so that it could be carried on by an assembly of elected and nominated members

About Krishnaji and the *Herald*, I have written to Feroze I do not know exactly how matters stand. Apparently there is a large overdraft on the bank and Krishnaji is personally responsible for it. During the past two months we have paid back fifty or sixty thousand rupees to another bank and I have no doubt that this other overdraft also will be tackled soon. In view, however, of Krishnaji's insistence, something has got to be done soon and I have written to Feroze about it. I would myself undertake the liability if I was not connected with Government. I am rather surprised at the bank giving trouble because the *Herald* is in a much sounder financial position now than it had ever been in the past. They put up with us when our finances were insecure. Now that they are stable, there should have been less difficulty.

There is another matter which I want to write to you about. Feroze has been in the *Herald* now for over six months and, from all accounts, has done very good work. Our income is between sixty and seventy thousand rupees a month and we are gradually reducing our liabilities. What is more important is that there is peace in the *Herald* office and cooperation between the editorial, managerial and press departments.

Feroze has been serving in an honorary capacity thus far. I think it is improper and unbusinesslike for this to continue. I suggest, therefore, that he should be given a salary from now onwards. What the salary should be, it is for you and the Directors to determine. Our topmost salary is Rs. 750 for Chalapathi Rau. Sitaram, an assistant manager and superintendent of the press, gets Rs. 500. I think Feroze might be given something in between, say, Rs. 600.

Let me know when you are coming to Delhi as I want to discuss Nepal matters with you.

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal

## 7. To Horace Alexander<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
14 July 1947

My dear Horace,

Thank you for your letter of the 3rd July and the list of birds at Khali. It is a formidable and most attractive list. But reading your letter and this list I find a little sad. Khali and the birds seem very far away from New Delhi

1. J.N. Collection.

I hope you are quite well now.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 8. On the Importance of Trees<sup>1</sup>

I have great interest in gardening. While I was in jail I developed that taste. It used to give me great pleasure to watch how plant life grew. It is a matter of surprise that so far no interest has been taken in tree plantation.

Large tracts of the country have become deserts owing to the negligence of the people, who cut trees without realizing their great value. To me cutting a well-grown tree is as painful and intolerable as killing a man. There should be a law that no one should cut a tree unless he has first planted a new one in its place.

The great harm done by cutting trees can be seen from the sandy wastes in Rajputana and elsewhere. There was a time when these parts contained many forests. They had somehow been destroyed and salt and sand spread over the whole area. The land is fertile and if only enough water could be made available the whole area would become cultivable.

I hope that tree plantation would be encouraged and people would help in beautifying the city.

1. Speech at a meeting organised in connection with the tree plantation week, New Delhi, 20 July 1947. *The Hindustan Times*, 21 July 1947.

## 9. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

24-7-47

Dear Bapu,

Received your letter.<sup>2</sup> It is always our duty to pay full attention to your views. But I think that if the Maulana goes out it would harm us much.

1 Pyarelal Papers, N M M.L. (Original in Hindi)

2. In his letter of 24 July 1947 Mahatma Gandhi wrote "Sardar is decidedly against his (Azad's) membership in the cabinet and so is Rajkumari Your cabinet must be strong and effective at the present juncture It should not be difficult to name another Muslim for the cabinet"

I fully agree with you that we should take such persons as can do the best possible work. We try to follow this principle. But whether in the Congress or in the Provincial Government it is not acted upon much. So many other factors are taken into consideration on the basis of which decisions are taken. About this matter we all shall talk with you later.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

## 10. The Congress in Bengal<sup>1</sup>

I understand that the President of the Bengal P.C.C. has invited P.C.C. members, Congress members of the Legislature and others to meet in convention to consider particularly the problems that face Bengal.<sup>2</sup> I think this is a wise move. Much has happened during recent months and many changes, good or bad, have taken place which make it incumbent on us to review the situation fully and decide upon the course of action. We should be in no hurry to take any new steps without full thought. I think the Bengal P.C.C. should continue both because constitutionally this is the right course and because this will give a chance for joint consideration of the problems. As future takes shape, we may reconsider our previous decision, but, for the present, there appears to be no need for constitutional changes in the structure of the Congress.<sup>3</sup>

I wish the convention every success

1 Message to a convention of Bengal Congress workers, Mymensingh, 25 July 1947. From *Hindusthan Standard*, 26 July 1947.

2 The people of Bengal feared a recrudescence of communal riots following the celebration of the independence day on 14 August in Pakistan and the minorities had become panicky. The problem before the Congress was how to get the cooperation of the leaders and workers of the Muslim League to restore confidence among the people and ensure peace and progress in the new State.

3 The convention, held on 26 and 27 July 1947, expressed the opinion that any division of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee would be detrimental to the interest of Bengal.

**11. To John Matthai<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
29 July 1947

My dear Matthai,

The Gandhi Ashram, Meerut, has received a large number of orders to make the new national flag out of khadi. Governmental orders thus far amount to over 6,000 flags of a large size. Municipalities and District Boards are also ordering these flags. So also the public. These flags have not only to be made quickly but have to be sent to their destination very soon. A difficulty has arisen owing to the rules for sending the parcels containing the flags by passenger train or post. Apparently there are some restrictions about this matter. I hope these restrictions will be removed for at least a fortnight so that the flags can be sent as soon as ready. Could you please look into this matter and issue the necessary orders immediately?

The Gandhi Ashram has two main centres where they will make these flags. One is at Meerut, U.P., the other is at Akbarpur, Fyzabad District, U.P.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1 J N Papers, N M M L

**12. The Congress Seva Dal<sup>1</sup>**

Indiscipline is the greatest enemy of a nation and that is the foe that we have to guard ourselves against, now that our fight with the external enemy has almost come to an end.

Our objective is being realized, and this is the time when we must guard against conflicts and indiscipline among ourselves. I find traces of them even among Congressmen. This is not a healthy sign.

Our first task at present is to strengthen our Government. First things must come first as sometimes good deeds are apt to bear bad fruits if done at inopportune moments. The old machine is wearing out, giving

1 Speech at a meeting of the G O C.s of the Congress Seva Dal at New Delhi, 30 July 1947. *Indian News Chronicle*, 31 July 1947.

place to new and it is our duty to set that new machine on a sound footing. Any untoward and ill-conceived step at such a moment is sure to bring harm to the cause. For example, strikes of mill workers and their demands may be quite justified in particular circumstances but if such steps are taken at a wrong moment these are sure to harm all concerned. Our internal differences are apt to undo all what we have done so far. We have all committed mistakes in the past but this is the time when we have of necessity to work as disciplined soldiers.

This is the time when the country needs the services of the Congress Seva Dal most. You, the Seva Dal volunteers, have both to learn and to teach discipline and united effort. Our country has yet to go far to take its place in the comity of nations. If you want to achieve that goal you should not waste your energy in futile discussions but go ahead with strength, unity and discipline.

### 13 Delhi<sup>1</sup>

The main task before a municipality is the removal of slums and *chawls* and to provide civic amenities to the people, particularly the poor. The real beauty of a city does not lie in a few palatial buildings but in the absence of slums.

You should by all means try to beautify the city by laying out imposing public buildings and fine roads. But I shall prefer a beginning to be made with the construction of houses for the poor. It pains me to see the vast majority of the people living in *chawls* and mud huts. The duty of any good Government is to remove this incongruity.

Delhi is not only the capital of India but her soul and the centre of her culture.

One basic and significant fact that has to be learnt from India's history is the capacity of her people to assimilate new ideas and accept new people. In that lay India's greatness. In the past century or so she has failed in keeping up her traditions and this has led to the country's decline. India will be great only if she can adjust herself to new trends of thought and circumstances.

1. Speech at the opening ceremony of the new meeting hall of the Delhi Municipal Committee, 10 August 1947 *The Hindustan Times*, 11 August 1947.

## 14. Two Alternatives before the Congress<sup>1</sup>

As for the suggestion from certain quarters that now since the Congress has achieved its goal—the country's independence—it should be dissolved, there are two alternatives before the Congress. Either to remain, as at present, an organisation consisting of all anti-imperialistic forces or to remain as a party based on certain political and economic principles. In the long run the latter course may have to be adopted; but if the Congress is dissolved just now various disruptive forces, which are already showing signs of growth, will crop up and grow, ultimately resulting in chaos which no sane man would like.

The Congress should now maintain, as is done by parties in power in Western countries, an elaborate machinery to collect statistics and start various research institutes to facilitate the work of the government of the party. Congress must now serve a twofold purpose; firstly it should voice the popular will and secondly remove any misunderstandings in public mind created by interested parties.

The Congress has always in view the welfare of the workers; but their grievances can be met only so far as conditions allow. When the schemes launched by the present Indian Government are accomplished the economic position of the country will change.

As for the question of the removal of controls the Government is on the horns of a dilemma. Some economists as well as a section of public opinion are in favour of removal of controls but some others including some of the Provincial Governments are of the opinion that they will be exposed to the utmost danger if controls are removed.

Regarding the objections raised by a number of Congressmen and others with regard to the place of the I.C.S. under the new regime I may say that in these matters merit is the supreme consideration. In fact the Government needs a much greater number of I.C.S. men but they are not available. After all we have to govern and serve the people and for this experience and ability are needed. Apart from this we have to pay the I.C.S. men in any case; so we have decided to extract work from them and then pay them. We will not pay them without any work.

1. Address to the members of the A.I.C.C. staff at Allahabad on 11 August 1947. From *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 13 August 1947, and A.I.C.C. File No. CPD 1(15)/1947, pp. 1-7, N.M.M.L.



## 15. Women and the National Struggle<sup>1</sup>

I find it a little difficult to write a foreword to this little book. The difficulty is not the book but the author of the book. How am I to deal with her and her writings? They do not require any commendation from me, and I would dislike to criticise overmuch.

It is easy to criticise any set of views in this complicated world that we live in. And Aruna Asaf Ali often says and writes something that is liable to criticism. But that criticism, however justified, would be poor stuff, for it would deal with some superficial aspect of a living, vibrant and challenging personality, who has shaken up many a sleeping person and become in many ways a symbol of these changing times.

Symbols are often disturbing and challenges are disconcerting. And so Aruna is both a disturbing and disconcerting individual to many. She does not fit in easily into the usual pattern, and perhaps she deliberately avoids doing so. She feels that she has a mission and is anxious to live up to it. The real crusaders are always few in number and there is something of the crusader, to a cause to which she is passionately attached, about her.

A crusader produces varying reactions on different people. The very force of personality and will attracts, and charms, and compels attention. And yet many people, afraid of this very compulsion of a personality or feeling uncomfortable because they are continually reminded of the crusade which might have the effect of upsetting their lives, do not like this impact. They prefer the normal routine of their lives.

Most of us go through that routine untouched and uninfluenced by external events or by the attraction of a great purpose. Some feel that attraction intellectually and try to work to that end, though without upsetting the even tenor of their lives. Yet others, few in number, feel in addition to the intellectual attraction a powerful emotional urge which drives them incessantly to action. That emotional urge comes usually not by the reading of books but by the impact of events.

During the last quarter of a century or more events have often moved fast in India bringing in their train shock and surprise, frustration and exhilaration. Many amongst us have been so affected by this shock of events that our lives and even our inner being have undergone a transformation.

1 Foreword to *Travel Talk* by Aruna Asaf Ali (Aundh 1947)

That was the effect in 1919 and 1920 on a very large number of persons as a result of Gandhiji's leadership in the national movement. Ten years later another wave passed over the land sweeping thousands of men and women and influencing millions. Yet again, in the early forties India was convulsed and out of this convulsion new symbols arose, stern and unbending and with something of iron in their souls. Aruna Asaf Ali was no newcomer on the political scene But 1942 transformed her and made her different from what she had been.<sup>2</sup> She stood out as an extraordinarily courageous fighter for India's freedom and because she was a woman and daughter of India, she struck even more the imagination of the Indian people.

Among the many strange things that have happened in India during this quarter of a century, perhaps the most notable is the emergence of Indian womanhood. Large numbers of Indian women have played an important role in our struggle for freedom. Many of them have stood out by their ability, capacity for organisation and self-sacrifice for a cause. Some of them can be ranked very high in any assembly of women all over the world This fact, more than any other, demonstrates the renaissance of the Indian people and the strong foundations on which we have built our movement for freedom

This little book mirrors this remarkable personality, not only in ideas but in the vigour of its style It is good writing but it is something much more than that, for it compels attention and forces people to think. Any book that does all this is a worthwhile book and the reader is the better for having read it, though he may feel a little uncomfortable in the process. It matters little whether one agrees with its main thesis or not. But it does matter whether our minds are static and closed or dynamic and receptive

For these reasons I commend this book and hope that there will be many to read it In the reading of it they will have some glimpse of that passionate urge which moves India and which will ultimately take India far. What that new India is going to be, none of us can say But whatever form or shape it may assume, it will consist of vital persons moving forward with dynamic urges And it is well for a nation when this is so.

2 Aruna Asaf Ali worked underground during the years of the Quit India movement The warrant of arrest against her was withdrawn in 1946



1. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>

Allahabad

9.1.38

Darling Indu,

News from Europe tells us that almost the whole continent is in the grip of a cold wave.<sup>2</sup> I have been wondering how you fared in South Germany where it must have been terribly cold. Probably this was good for winter sports. Here the cold has suddenly retreated and we are having a fairly warm spell.

I was in Bombay last week for five days for the Working Committee meeting.<sup>3</sup> It was warm there of course. Bapu was recuperating at Juhu and I went there twice.<sup>4</sup> The beach was delightful and I was sorely tempted to have a dip in the sea. But no such luck.

In Bombay I met Somerset Maugham,<sup>5</sup> the writer. Also Gunther, the author of *Inside Europe*, and his wife.<sup>6</sup> Last year Gunther published his diaries in *Nash's Magazine*<sup>7</sup>—perhaps you saw them. He had met me two years ago in London and he had said in his diary that I had a rich chocolate complexion exactly like Josephine Baker's.<sup>8</sup> The poor man was repeatedly reminded of this, much to his embarrassment. I presided over a meeting he addressed in Bombay<sup>9</sup> and our speeches were broadcasted. I think this was the first time I have been broadcasted in this way.

The house is full at present. There is Nan and her children and Betty and her kids. But soon Anand Bhawan will be empty again. Nan is going to Lucknow tonight and Chand & co. will go back to Woodstock. Betty will be going to Bombay. I shall go to Lucknow and from there to Lahore.

1 Indira Gandhi Papers, N M M L

2 At this time Indira was studying at Somerville College, Oxford

3 The Congress Working Committee, presided over by Nehru, met in Bombay from 2 to 4 January 1938

4 Mahatma Gandhi, who was suffering from high blood pressure, stayed in Juhu, Bombay, from 7 December 1937 to 7 January 1938 on medical advice. On 2 and 3 January Nehru called on him

5 (1874-1965); English novelist and playwright

6 Nehru met Somerset Maugham and John Gunther at the Taj Mahal Hotel in Bombay on 2 January 1938

7 A British journal started in 1909, later merged with *Pall Mall* magazine and subsequently merged with *Good Housekeeping*

8 Josephine Baker (1906-1975), an American singer and dancer, was a resistance heroine of the Second World War and acted as mother to a group of international orphans

9 On 5 January 1938, Nehru presided over a public lecture delivered by Gunther at the Cowasji Jehangir Hall, Bombay. The lecture was organised by the Congress Socialist Party

and the Frontier. On my return at the end of the month I shall have to go to Wardha for another Working Committee meeting.<sup>10</sup> Soon after this will be the Haripura Congress.<sup>11</sup> I am so tired of this moving about. But constant travelling is an unavoidable routine in this vast country for a politician.

What is far worse is the conflict that is rapidly developing within the Congress.<sup>12</sup> I am worried about this and I do not know what I shall do after Haripura. I want to be free from all burdens of office and to devote myself to special departments of Congress work as well as reading and writing. But it is not always possible to do what one wants to do. And when a serious situation arises, one cannot shirk responsibility. So I am in a tangle.

You will let me know, will you not?, if you want more money. I have a small balance at Lloyd's now and I can let you have a cheque if you are in need of it. I suppose you received £50 on January 1st through Lloyd's.

Love,

Papu

I suppose you have met Subhas Bose in London. He will be declared elected to the Congress Presidentship in another week or ten days.<sup>13</sup>

- 10 The Working Committee, presided over by Nehru, met at Wardha from 3 to 6 February 1938.
- 11 The 51st session of the Indian National Congress was held at Haripura in Gujarat from 19 to 21 February 1938 under the presidentship of Subhas Bose
- 12 Differences had been growing between Mahatma Gandhi and Subhas Bose
- 13 On 18 January 1938, it was announced that Subhas Chandra Bose had been elected President of the Haripura session of the Indian National Congress.

## 2. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>

Allahabad  
Jan. 14 1938

Darling Indu,

Some days ago I wrote to you a brief note. But that day was not to end before death again hovered over Anand Bhawan.<sup>2</sup> Before we had re-

1 Indira Gandhi Papers, N M M L

2 Nehru's mother, Swarup Rani Nehru, died on 10 January 1938

covered from one shock, another came and numbed us.<sup>3</sup> Death is almost always an unwelcome visitor and yet it came as it should come—suddenly and in the fullness of time. I was always afraid that Dolamma might be paralysed and linger on in pain and torment. Fortunately there was the briefest of pain, if any, and she fainted and became wholly unconscious right at the beginning. For nearly six hours she remained in this state, breathing heavily, and then quietly and peacefully passed away in the early morning at 4.45 a.m.

We had spent a busy bustling day. Nan was going that night to Lucknow and Chand, Tara and Rita were following in the car the next morning. Betty and her children were leaving soon for Bombay. And so there was packing and arranging and talking and I felt too tired to go to office and remained at home most of the time. I played with the children. And then there were several big packing cases containing caskets and addresses from Assam and these had been opened. I sent for Vyas to take them away for the museum. There was more of a family atmosphere than I had experienced for a long time. Dolamma was more active than usual and, I noticed particularly that she was better than she had been. We sat down to dinner, a large family party and Dolamma and Bibi<sup>4</sup> also sat there. We talked of old times and family affairs and told stories of each other. Then Nan went away to pack and prepare for departure. We all adjourned to Dolamma's room. She asked me about you—how you were—if I had heard from you recently—if I had written to you. I told her that I had written that very evening. 'Did you send my love to her?' she asked. I confessed that I had not specifically mentioned it but it was there of course taken for granted. But she was not satisfied. She said she could not make herself and so I must not forget to send you always her love. I promised to do so.

We all moved to Nan's dressing room and sat there for a few minutes. It was about 10.45 p.m. Nan said it was time for her to go and we all got up. Dolamma got up, from a stool on which she had been sitting, with some difficulty. She bent forward to embrace Nan and suddenly fell towards Nan. Nan and I took hold of her. We saw that all was not well and that something had happened. I asked her what the matter was but there was no answer. I took her gently to her bedroom, partly leading her, partly almost carrying her. She tried to walk but was not very successful. We put her in bed and soon she was wholly unconscious. She started breathing hard. The doctor came and said it was bad attack of paralysis

3. On 11 January 1938, Rajpati Kaul, sister of Swarup Rani Nehru, died at Anand Bhawan

4. Rajpati Kaul

and the brain was probably affected—cerebral haemorrhage. If so there was little hope. Anyway there was nothing to be done except to wait and see for the next few hours. Bibi and I were in her room all night and Nan and Betty were next door in Nan's room, coming in frequently to see how mother was. At about 4.30 a.m. the hard breathing became slower and quieter. At 4.45 it was all over. That was exactly the time seven years ago when Dadu died.

After the first shock Bibi worked hard at various arrangements. There were crowds of people coming. All business was suspended in the city and at midday the funeral procession started. On the insistence of people this took a long route, right through Katra and Chowk, on to the embankment and then to the Sangam. A vast, more or less silent crowd followed.

We returned about 4.30 p.m. I learnt on return that Bibi, after finishing up the cleaning, had felt unwell and had fainted. She was lying unconscious and was breathing in exactly the same way as mother had done the night before. Still we thought that she was merely tired out. The doctor came and disillusioned us, telling us that Bibi was suffering from exactly the same trouble as Dolamma. She did not regain consciousness. At 4.45 a.m. exactly on January 11th she passed away.

So within 24 hours we had two deaths in Anand Bhawan and though Death had triumphed, it seemed almost that it came at Bibi's bidding. It was strange how peaceful both the faces were after death, especially Bibi's.

People have come to us in large numbers. And thousands of messages And incessant activity has kept us moving and occupied during these three days. But this house feels strange and odd, and I find myself going unconsciously to mother's room to say good night to her or to ask her about something

Anand Bhawan has been full. It will be completely deserted day after tomorrow. Nan has just gone to Lucknow, Betty and Raja (he rushed up to Allahabad on learning of mother's death) are leaving after a few hours. So am I and Ranjit. I do not like the idea of living here all by myself.

We shall have to seek fresh adjustments and to settle down to new ways. That always happens as one generation passes off leaving the stage to another. One generation in our family has now gone completely, and I have become an elder, gradually fading off. It is going to be lonely in Anand Bhawan. In the next fortnight I shall be away and then I shall come back.

It is meal time and crowds of pilgrims are streaming into Anand Bhawan. The house remains but more and more it becomes a hollow shell. So it will remain till a new spirit fills its empty rooms and verandas

And so I shall keep my last promise to your grandmother and send you her love. But how can I convey in words the abundance and intensity of that love of hers for you? Or her love for her son which enveloped her and filled her. I know well that whatever of love and affection may be in store for us in the future, and we have been fortunate in that respect in the past, neither of us will ever experience that full flood of unselfish and enveloping love that only a mother or a grandmother can give.

But we must not be sorrowful for she died at the right time and as she should have done. For years now she was almost a wraith, weary of life. Death must have been a release to her.

Love,

Papu

### 3. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>

Kohat  
24-1-38

Darling,

A letter came from you yesterday reaching me at Peshawar.<sup>2</sup> I feel like writing to you although I am tired after a very heavy day and it is late. A more serious difficulty is the lack of a suitable pen to write. My three fountain pens have suddenly and most unaccountably failed me—including my close companion of seven or eight years which wrote the *Glimpses* and the *Auto*. Almost there seems to have been a conspiracy in the pen world. I have to use Upadhyaya's pen and this is utterly bad.

Three, four days in the Frontier have been full of interest and even some excitement. The weather has been ideal—cold and sunny. In the day time the sun is hot and almost scorching but the wind is cold. In the shade one shivers. I would love to sun-bathe in this climate. I find my appetite going up.

At Abbottabad a welcome gate consisting of pillars of snow was erected. I have had tremendous welcome everywhere, including the welcome of the tribal people in the independent areas. One old Khan—(the wretched pen has failed me!), who had lost everything during the civil disobedience movement and had his house burnt down by the military,

1 Indira Gandhi Papers, N M M L

2 Nehru toured the North West Frontier Province from 21 to 27 January 1938. See also *Selected Works*, Vol 8, pp 472-478



gave me his warm chital coat. It was an ancient well worn garment, not over clean. But it was the most precious thing he had and he gave it to me. It is no use to me, but the graciousness of the gift has made it very valuable.

Today we motored from Peshawar to Kohat. On the way we passed through many miles of tribal territory inhabited by the Afridis. At every village they had turned out in force to welcome us, almost everyone with a gun carelessly hanging round his shoulder. There are no restrictions on the keeping of arms in this tribal area and dearer than wife or child is the gun of the Afridi. They make them themselves in primitive fashion but astonishingly good and cheap.

The Afridis gave us a welcoming salvo of gun fire before each village. We had to get done and speak to them and have tea and half boiled eggs. It was difficult to consume eggs every two hundred yards or so, yet one had to do it. Then came a regular banquet *dumba* (roast lamb) and fine thick bread. Both were well cooked. At one place a lamb and a goat were presented to us alive. We could not carry them about and so we gave them back and I suppose they were slaughtered later.

One of my Pathan hosts has presented me with some handspun and handwoven pieces of cloth done by his womenfolk. One piece was for me, the other and the finer one for Indira! It is a fine piece of work though done somewhat crudely. I thought of you at Oxford and now, whether you willed it or not, the burden of notoriety was already yours. And with that notoriety an abundance of affection and goodwill from numberless persons unknown to you. You cannot escape it or the responsibility that it entails, even as I am a prisoner bound down by cords harder than those of steel.

What a magnificent people are these men and women of the north. And the border tribes, about whom we read so much and perhaps imagine to be fierce savages, how hospitable and likable they are.

Writing in pencil is a tiring business. So good-bye, my darling,

Papu

4. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>Lucknow  
29-1-38

Darling Indu,

I have just come back from the Frontier a few hours at Lahore *en route* and now a few hours in Lucknow before I proceed to Allahabad. As I have come<sup>1</sup> here rather unexpectedly I have a little leisure and how can I employ it to better advantage than by writing to you? I shall be in Allahabad for two days only, tomorrow and the day after, and they will be very full days. So I am writing now<sup>2</sup> but I shall post this letter from Allahabad where I expect to find your letters awaiting me.

The week in the Frontier Province has been full of new and worthwhile experiences and, if I had the time, I could write a lot about it. It has been a heartening time and I have had a peep at an aspect of India which few of us know much about. I might have<sup>1</sup> written to you again from the train or from some halting place but the tragedy of my fountain pens came in the way. At last someone took pity on me and presented me with his own pen. The nib does not suit but it functions anyway.

The cold wind and the hot sun have left their mark on my face. It is sun-burnt and the skin is peeling off. But I feel fit and well except for a slight lack of sufficient sleep. My appetite, as I wrote to you, went up markedly and I consumed more meat than<sup>1</sup> I have ever done. There was little help for it as meat was the chief diet. One of the most satisfying meals I have had was with the Afridis in the tribal territory. It consisted of *dumba*—lamb roasted and thick bread somewhat resembling शिरमाल.<sup>2</sup> Even Upadhyaya relished it.

My visit to the Frontier was fairly well reported and people are full of it here, especially the great welcome I had from the tribal people, particularly the Afridis and Waziris. I was presented with a lamb and a goat and one Afridi Khan even presented his son to Khan Sahib and me. A bit of a handful! We told him to join the Khudai Khitmatgars (the Red Shirts) and thus serve the country. These Red Shirts were all over the place and sometimes lined the road for miles. Each group had its pipers and drummers, and often bagpipes. In the tribal territory almost everyone seemed to have a gun—not the Red Shirts who were confined to the Frontier Province. We noticed even a donkey boy in the tribal area carrying a gun. Every group of villagers had a primitive gun factory.

1 Indira Gandhi Papers, N.M.M.L.

2 *Shirmal*—Leavened bread baked with ghee and milk

Fine upstanding men and women they were all over the Frontier and bonny children but all very poor and shabby. There was no cringing about them but an open-hearted welcome and hospitality. There was a tremendous shaking of hands with them and *salam-aleikum* and *starey mashey* and *pa khair aqlai*. The first you know—it is the universal Islamic greeting meaning 'peace be upon you' to which the answer is *waleikum-as-salam*—'and on you be peace.' *Starey mashey* is a beautiful greeting. I think I wrote to you about it. It means 'may you not get tired'. How suitable it is not only for travellers on the road but for all pilgrims through life. The third greeting *pa khair aqlai* means something to the effect that you hope the person addressed has come in safety and well-being

I am so fascinated by these people that I want to get nearer to them and that can only be through their language—Pushtu. I have brought back primers and books in this I wonder if I shall even have time to read them. But I have little doubt that I shall be drawn back to the Frontier. And next time I go that way I shall certainly try to cross over to Kashmir. I was within a dozen miles of Kashmir this time and quite a number of Kashmiris came over to me to my meetings

Abdul Ghaffar Khan was always addressed as *Fakhr-e-Afghan*—the pride of the Afghans. Sometimes they addressed me as *Fakhr-e-Hind*—the pride of India. Once there was *Jawaharlal Khan zindabad*.

The Red Shirts used to dance sometimes and I was struck by the resemblance to Russian dancing. I realised the common origin from Central Asia—the Russian men's dancing is I believe derived from Cassack dancing. And this made me realise that in effect, geographically and partly culturally, I was in Central Asia. There is a vast difference between the Frontier people and the Punjabis. And yet there was definitely that link, that something, which binds the whole of India together. My mind wandered repeatedly to past times and to the great events that the Frontier had seen. To the caravans that had come through and across it through countless ages—to the Aryans and Scythians and Turks and Huns and Mughals who had marched into India and been largely absorbed by India. To the coming of Alexander and the Macedonians—I crossed the Indus almost at the very spot where Alexander is supposed to have crossed.

I thought of the ancient times of the *Mahabharata* when Afghanistan was called Gandhara (from which Gandhari, the mother of the Kauravas); of Ashoka who has innumerable memorials all over the Frontier, of the Kushan Empire with its seat at Peshawar, the meeting place of these great cultures; the Indians, the Chinese, and the Western Asian mixed with Graeco-Roman. The cultural intercourse of ages came to my mind—how India gave her religion and art to the Far East, her science and mathematics to the Arab world. But I cannot go on adding to this list!

Allahabad  
30th Jan.

I could not continue this letter in Lucknow. My night journey was an exciting one as vast numbers of pilgrims were travelling for *Mauni Amavasya mela* here which takes place tomorrow. The platform was crowded with them and the third class carriages were crammed. I have never seen so many people jammed in a railway carriage. They were so tightly packed that it was literally impossible for a person to move or lift up his hand. Many of them were partly hanging out of the windows. I had an intermediate ticket but even the inter was overfull. A number of special trains had preceded us but still the rush continued. At the last moment some additional carriages were added and there was an empty 2nd class compartment. So I promoted myself to 2nd. Within a half an hour, at a wayside station, my compartment was suddenly invaded by about 20 or 25 persons. They were all 3rd class passengers but I did not have the heart to ask them to go. They were decent folk and we made friends and travelled together for the rest of the night. They did everything in their power not to disturb me, and I, selfish creature, spread out on my berth and tried to sleep while the others were closely seated on all the berths as well as the floor of the compartment. The train was greatly delayed and arrived over two hours late.

On arrival here I saw a sheaf of letters waiting for me, among them three from you. But before dealing with them I shall carry on with my old theme—with intervening distraction. For I hear the *jais* of the pilgrims who come to visit Anand Bhawan in crowds and I have to go to see them every few minutes. They are swarming all over Anand Bhawan and Swaraj Bhawan, and I am the only person here to meet and welcome them.

Do you remember, when you were here, there was much excitement over the abduction of Hindu women by the Waziris? I issued a statement to the press also—'Bombing and Kidnapping on the Frontier'.<sup>2</sup> When I was in Bannu in the Frontier Province recently I referred to these incidents. Unfortunate as they were, it was obvious that the motive behind was economic. These dwellers of the bare mountains have little to sustain them and for generations their chief occupation has been fighting each other or the British Government. They try to make both ends meet by occasional raids and abductions of persons whom they hold up for ransom. They treat their captives courteously and well. They look upon the whole transaction as a purely business proposition. The policy of the British Government has kept them economically, educationally and

2 See *Selected Works*, Vol. 8, pp. 457-462.

culturally backward and has at the same time roused all their warlike instincts. A friendly approach and some planned attempt to meet their economic difficulties would go a long way to solve their problems. They are extraordinarily hospitable and susceptible to friendly overtures.

As I was speaking to a vast audience at Bannu, which included many tribesmen, suddenly you crept into my mind and I began talking of you. I have a daughter, I said, an only child, young in years, whom I have sent abroad for her education. From her childhood upwards I have tried to make her self-reliant, so that she might be able to take care of herself wherever she might be and face every contingency with courage and confidence. I sent her to distant schools in various parts of India to enable her to get to know our countrymen better and have some knowledge of their languages. For I wanted her, as I want all others, to realise the diversity and at the same time the unity of this land of ours. I have sent her abroad so that she may get to know something of the wide world and its problems and so fit herself for the service of India and her people. I should like all young men and women in India to train themselves in some such way and thus become true and efficient soldiers of freedom. So I spoke. And then I said that if she happened to come to the Frontier territory, as I hoped she would, I would unhesitatingly and willingly agree to her going to Waziristan unaccompanied, for I was confident that she could look after herself and I was equally confident that the Waziris would welcome her and treat her as a friend and a guest.

After the meeting a man from Waziristan came to me apparently thinking that you were on the point of starting from that country, and offered his services to accompany you and serve you during your journey.

From Bannu we went to Dera Ismail Khan, passing on the way big hills of solid rock salt. We saw the mining and brought away some beautiful crystals of salt. These salt hills, nature's gift to man, are closely guarded by the Government of India so as to preserve their salt monopoly. And the poor people round about even lack for salt. Such is the modern world.

I have just come back from my fourth or fifth visit to the verandah and portico to meet the crowds that are pouring in. There is a hum all over this empty house. But the affection of these simple folk fills this emptiness.

I now come to your letters. About the suggestion made by the Lief-tincks what do you expect me to say? Of course the cooperative movement is good and should be pushed, but to be a success it must have an economic and social basis of the right kind. Just at present it is difficult even to push it far. Kagawa<sup>3</sup> with all his earnestness and follow-

3 Toyohiko Kagawa (1888-1960), Japanese poet, writer and social reformer.

ing has not been able to affect Japan's policy.

Do not bother about the complexities of the present situation in India. They are inevitable and no country can escape them. We must go through all these stages. Personally I keep well in spite of everything. I wish you had my health and vitality.

About the Independence pledge<sup>4</sup> I think you are under some misapprehension. The new pledge is not a toning down of the old one; it is a shortening of it and a leaving out of the last part calling for an immediate campaign of civil disobedience. This was necessary in 1930 but does not fit in with present circumstances. Otherwise the pledge is the same, minus some details.

The ban on Congress ministers participating in official functions has not been lifted, though some ministers have misbehaved. Of course it is difficult to draw the line often as the ministers themselves being high officials have to meet others on business.

About your schools it is difficult for me to suggest anything worthwhile. Personally for myself I would prefer P.P.E.<sup>5</sup> But that does not help as the choice has to be made by you. Miss Darbishire<sup>6</sup> and your tutor should certainly be consulted.

You must remember that these schools are really pegs on which you hang your general reading and training. Whichever peg is helpful should be taken, but the really important thing is something besides the peg. And this leads me to your health. It is not right that you should be tired out.

Later

I could not write on because of numerous interruptions. And then I went to the *mela* by the river bank and spent some time there. I have just returned.

Why should you suffer from malaise? Your father seems to flourish under almost any conceivable circumstances and the ordinary ailments do not touch him. Do you worry about anything? I suppose I ought to worry about various matters but as a matter of fact I seldom do, and if I do get hot and bothered, it is only for a short while I recover soon. It is really not worthwhile and is certainly not helpful. Even worrying about

4. On 26 January 1938, Independence Day was celebrated and a new independence pledge was taken at public meeting. See also *Selected Works*, Vol 8, p. 400 fn. 2.

5. "Philosophy, Politics and Economics"

6. Helen Darbishire (1881-1961), authority on Wordsworth, Principal of Somerville College, Oxford, 1931-45.

one's health is not good enough. If you sleep enough and take some exercise, then you can work as hard as you like. Do not overdo the exercise if you feel at all tired. I think one or two simple *asans* are definitely good, especially the *Sarvangasana*. Try doing this two or three times a day for a couple of minutes each time. It has an extraordinarily refreshing effect. Try also some simple breathing exercises—if you can remember what I used to do. All this takes very little time and it tones one up.

Probably we shall meet next summer—in June or thereabouts.<sup>7</sup> I intend going to Europe but if that is not possible then you will have to come here. But I do not like the idea of your coming here in summer and I feel definitely that I want a mental change from India. So, unless the unforeseen occurs, I shall go West. After the Haripura Congress is over I shall sit down and fashion out a programme. Just at present I am in a state of flux.

You ask for some money. Of course you should let me know when you want it, or you can always write to Bachhraj direct. As a matter of fact the money that is paid to you two monthly cannot be enough for you. This amounts to £300 a year. When I was at Cambridge I used to get about £400 a year but then my father was richer than yours! At the same time prices and costs of everything have gone up considerably since then. So it is quite natural that you should want to supplement your fixed allowance. It was meant to be supplemented. I enclose a cheque for £30. If you want more you will let me know.

Today I received two rather unusual pictures of me—I do not remember when they were taken—probably in Calcutta recently.<sup>8</sup> I am sending them to you.

I enclose a translation of an interesting letter I received last October from the Faqir of Ipi, the Waziri leader.<sup>9</sup> I am issuing it to the press today.

Do you remember my sending you a cutting of an article from *The Modern Review* called *The Rashtrapati*?<sup>10</sup> I have a confession to make. I wrote that article! It gave me some amusement and the idea of watching

7 On 2 June 1938, Nehru sailed for Europe to see Indira and "to freshen up my tired and puzzled mind", and returned with Indira in November 1938.

8 Nehru had visited Calcutta from 25 October to 2 November 1937 to attend the Congress Working Committee and AICC meetings.

9 The Faqir of Ipi had written "war between us and the Indian Government is entirely due to their unwarranted attack on our liberties, and not because of our proselytising mania. The present situation in Waziristan is the result of the excesses and the policy of aggressive conquest adopted by the Government of India."

10 See *Selected Works*, Vol. 8, pp. 520-523.

other people's reactions to it was also entertaining. One evening after dinner I was in the mood to write and so I sat down to it and finished it off. I did not want anyone here to know and so did not even give it to Upadhyaya to type. I sent the manuscript in original to Padmaja and asked her to send a typed copy to *The Modern Review*. Nobody found out. I have now taken a number of persons into the secret, and indeed it will not remain much of a secret for long.

This letter has become scandalously long, and with its enclosures will make a bulky packet. But perhaps I shall not write to you a long letter again till after the Haripura Congress. So I have devoted a good part of today to you.

Love,

Papu

## 5. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>

Jarakhar

Dist. Hamirpur, U.P

7.2.38

Darling,

Here I am in a remote rural area in the U.P. I have come here from Wardha by car and train, and I intended finishing up the journey by plane. But the plans fell through owing to the non-receipt of my telegram by the people here in time. An express telegram that I sent day before yesterday reached here this afternoon. And so when I reached Jhansi confidently expecting a plane to be waiting for me, I found to my surprise that there was not a soul expecting me. I did not feel very bright or happy about it as these few days before the Congress are full of work and I had only consented to come here after much persuasion. I betook myself to the waiting room, had a bath, and sat down to read Aldous Huxley's *Ends and Means*.<sup>2</sup> For some time I have been carrying this about with me unread. And now I was suddenly at a loose end, an unusual experience. After my irritations toned down, I rather liked this experience. I found the book very interesting in the real sense of the word, that is thought-provoking. One was repeatedly compelled to examine one's own public activities by some of the tests suggested.

1 Indira Gandhi Papers, N.M.M.L.

2 Published in 1937.



But I was found out soon enough and taken away from my refuge. There was nothing special to be done and so I went out for a drive. I saw (from outside) Rani Lakshmbai's<sup>3</sup> palace, where now—a scandalous state of affairs—a *kotwali* flourishes. Later in the evening I took a slow train and after the train journey a long thirty-mile drive by car

A district conference is being held here.<sup>4</sup> It is now all the fashion to hold our conferences in villages and this experiment, started at Faizpur last year,<sup>5</sup> has succeeded wonderfully. Vast crowds roll up and the whole atmosphere is that of rural India, so different from our towns. In the towns the villagers come of course but they feel out of place and ill at ease. About a month ago we had our UP Political Conference at Harduaganj,<sup>6</sup> a village near Aligarh. About a hundred thousand persons turned up—it was an astonishing sight.

Successful as these conferences are, they are not unmixed blessings for the villagers. A large area is occupied. Crops have to be cut down (with compensation), and, what is worse, their neighbouring fields get spoilt. Thousands of people come by bullock carts and the bullocks graze about and consume the crops.

I have just been for a midnight stroll in the grounds here. Thousands of people sleeping on the ground in the open—some with quilts लिहाफ, most with cotton sheets only to cover them. Bullock carts parked all over the place. Scores of new shops put up temporarily. Some amusements—a theatre, even a cinema! The little village blossoms out as a town almost.

Haripura of course is going to do this on a grand scale. Under Nandal Bose's directions an artistic town of huts is growing up with many of the modern conveniences—water supply, proper roads, electric lighting, sanitation, organised food supply &c.

I must go to bed now. I have not had a decent night's rest for a week. Because of this I have agreed to fly back to Allahabad tomorrow. This will save me another tiring journey and a bad night.

3 Rani Lakshmbai (1835-1858) became the regent of Jhansi State after the death of her husband in 1853. But the British refused to recognise her or her adopted son Damodar Rao. She fell fighting the British at the battle of Kotah-ki-Sarai in Gwalior on 17 June 1858.

4 Nehru addressed the Hamirpur District Political Conference in the village of Jarakhur on 8 February 1936.

5 The Faizpur Congress was held from 27 to 28 December 1936. See also *Selected Works*, Vol 7, pp. 591-618.

6 Nehru addressed the U.P. Political Conference at Harduaganj on 31 December 1937. See *Selected Works*, Vol 8, pp. 372-375.

8th Feb.,

I have been wandering about this village and the camps of the numerous village folk who have come here. This is Bundelkhand and the Bundelkhandis are a sturdy lot of people. It is a poor country, hilly and stony and lacking water. Consequently the people are poor and backward. The women here wear huge rings round their ankles—silver or of cheaper stuff, usually the latter. These vary in weight from a pound to ten pounds each. Imagine having to wear them and having to walk and run about with them! They are not only heavy but also broad so that the feet have to be kept fairly wide apart. They twinkle when the women walk; it is a pleasant sound.

The more I see of village women the more I like their figures as compared to town women. Perhaps this is so because they work hard. But the ideal exercise for learning poise and the way to walk is to walk with a jar of water on the head. Almost every woman in the village here has to do this daily and often several times a day. I have seen women with the earthen pots—*घड़े*—one on top of the other, balanced on the head walking unconcernedly along. Occasionally they would take an additional one under the arm

Anand Bhawan  
8/2

I have come here by plane. It took an hour and twenty minutes and saved me a long and very tiring railway journey. The house is empty and very silent. As I returned rather unexpectedly no one has been to see me.

Sarojini Naidu suggested that I might send you the enclosed cutting of my speech at Dera Ismail Khan.<sup>7</sup> She gave me the cutting. So I enclose it.

A brief note from you has met me here.

Love,

Your loving  
Papu

<sup>7</sup> See *Selected Works*, Vol. S, pp. 473-476

## 6. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>

Allahabad

12.2.38

Darling,

I had not intended writing to you again before leaving for Haripura but a letter from you has come and this has induced me to send a few lines. Not that there is anything demanding a reply in your letter.

Very soon I shall be on my way to Haripura. I am not in the best of condition as I have caught a cold and my head is heavy and the throat very sore. I feel more like a horse than a human being. The work at the Congress is likely to be exacting as we are on the verge of crises here. May be by the time you get this *Puphi* might have ceased to be minister. I do not know definitely yet but the chances of a break increase.

I note that you have decided in favour of history.

Edward Thompson is a curious person. I think he is honest but he is terribly nervy and pessimistic and so gets on other people's nerves. He has fallen out with the British in India and with the Indians of course. He is looked upon with suspicion by most people. The first time I met him—were you with me in Oxford then?—I quarrelled with him. Later he gave me a very fine review of my *Autobiography* in *The Observer*. I think it was the best review of the book, although others were more laudatory. It showed insight. That review and the book brought us nearer to each other. When I met him here he irritated me greatly but the irritation did not go to anger for I saw how unhappy he was.

And so you missed the *aurora borealis*.<sup>2</sup>

Love,

Papu

I am having some of our Congress publications sent by you.

1. Indira Gandhi Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. The northern lights

## 7. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>

Bombay

27.2.38

Darling,

I have not written to you for an age it seems—to be accurate for about

1. Indira Gandhi Papers, N.M.M.L. Nehru, along with other members of the Congress Working Committee, reached Bombay on 23 February 1938.

a fortnight. It has been a full time of course with the Haripura Congress & the ministerial crisis but I would have found time to write if I had not felt rather out of sorts all this time. I brought a cold with me to Haripura and this grew worse because of incessant speaking and swallowing vast quantities of dust. Haripura was an impressive camp stretching out for nearly three miles on the banks of the river Tapti. It was a bamboo city with a full water supply, electric light and other city conveniences. But a violent duststorm lasting two days nearly suffocated us all.

From Haripura I came here five days ago and tonight I am going back to the U.P.—to Lucknow first and then to Allahabad. My throat and cold are a little better. I am writing this in some haste a little before the train goes.

You must have learnt about the ministerial crisis in the U.P. and Bihar.<sup>2</sup> The ministers sent in their resignations. The Viceroy, meaning the British Government, have climbed down almost completely and the ministers have gone back to their jobs. The Congress position has been greatly strengthened.

I have to give you some bad news. Jal Naoroji is suffering from fairly advanced tuberculosis. For over a month he has been in hospital and nobody suspected T.B. And now they have suddenly discovered that he is an advanced case. My faith in doctors is lessening day by day.

I shall write to you more from Lucknow.

Love,

Your loving  
Papu

2 The Congress Ministries in the U.P. and Bihar resigned on 15 February 1938 on the issue of release of political prisoners, but resumed office after reaching an understanding with the respective Governors. See also *Selected Works*, Vol. 8, pp. 378-380.

## 8. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>

Lucknow  
March 2, 1938

Darling Indu,

Your letters await me I suppose in Allahabad and so for long I have not received any. I am still on my way and Lucknow is a halting place only.

1 Indira Gandhi Papers, N.M.M.L.

For two days I have been here, resting partly and attending some committee meetings I am gradually getting over my cold and tiredness. For a while I feared that something like last year's illness might be repeated but I am sure now that this will not happen. The doctor has thumped and patted me all over and pronounced me generally fit. What is more to the point I feel much better already. I intend having my fortnight at Khali soon—probably from the 10th to the 25th March—and I expect to return to the plains bursting with energy.

About my going to Europe everything is vague and uncertain, except my desire to go there and see you. But the story has gone round and everyone asks me about it. It is a tiring business to have to answer the same question over and over again. By the time I have decided finally there will probably be no berth left! But that is a minor matter and is not likely to keep me back. It may perhaps delay my departure and make me take the full taste of the monsoon.

When in Bombay I spent a morning with Jamnalalji at Juhu. He arranged for horses and I had a gallop on the sands—so did Raja but with little success as he had a fall. Then we all had a swim in the sea, or at least those who could swim, the others not venturing far. I managed to get hold of a Lilo air bed and it was delightful to float about on it. I remembered that the last sea bath I had had was at Port Dickson with you.

Another unusual experience in Bombay was a visit to Elephanta. Long long ago I had gone there when I was a child and I had forgotten all about it. Always when I go to Bombay my days are so crowded that I find no time for excursions. This time I was luckier. Taken as a whole I was disappointed in the caves I expected a greater richness and variety. There were three or four fine figures—a bashful Parvati<sup>2</sup> on her wedding day and some *dwarvals*<sup>3</sup> But the *Trimurti*<sup>4</sup> was magnificent and overpowering. That head with the wisdom and thought of ages behind it, ascetic and yet so sophisticated and full of the knowledge of life, unattached and unentangled and yet enveloping all that came within its ken, calm and with an astonishing strength I thought of the Rock of Ages, how appropriate in a way it was; but that too only described one aspect of it. My mind wandered to the sculptors who had wrought this wondrous thing in ages past, seemingly with their hands but really with the genius which filled their minds. How long did it take them? Was it the work of one generation or more? As I stood there gazing in wonderment I felt very trivial and commonplace before this majesty in stone. Silent and contemplative I returned to my launch.

2 The consort of Shiva.

3 Gatekeepers.

4 The three-faced deity.

Tara and Rita have had their tonsils taken out. They came back from hospital yesterday and are still in the quiet and icy stage. In Bombay Dr. Shah asked me about your throat and I discovered what a careless father I was. I had never asked you about it? Have you had any throat trouble? Colds or sore throats or anything else which might be traceable to the removal of the tonsils?

Love,

Your loving  
Papu

## 9. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>

Lucknow  
9.3.38

Darling Indu,

I arrived here this morning to find Mehr Taj ill in bed. The poor girl has a thin time in school and is not properly looked after. She came to Nan a few days ago looking ghastly. When her temperature was taken it was found that she had fairly high fever. She had also hurt her knee running. She is now getting better. It has been a great thing for her that she could come to visit Nan and the children every Sunday during the past few months. Otherwise she would have been completely isolated. Her people seldom write to her. The Pathan does not believe in reading or writing.

The ministerial crisis ended on the very terms that we had been asking. It was a complete come-down for the British Government. Of course the language used was round about and diplomatic as is always the case. We had decided that if the crisis continued we would ask the other ministries to resign also. To do so right at the beginning would have been unwise and it would have made it impossible for the Viceroy to climb down as he did eventually.

I met Joad<sup>2</sup> in London. His writings are interesting but he seemed to me one of those persons who are so ineffective and disillusioned with everything and everybody.

Some people have come to see me and so I must go off.

Love,

Papu

<sup>1</sup> Indira Gandhi Papers, N M M L

<sup>2</sup> C E M Joad (1891-1953); British philosopher and author of several books including *Common Sense Ethics* (1921) and *The Testament of Joad* (1937).

10. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>

Khali

March 11, 1938

Darling Indu,

So at last I have come to Khali.<sup>2</sup> For more than two years there has been talk about it and during this period I have wandered a good deal all over India. But Khali, in my own province and not difficult of access, still remained outside my track. I remember just three years ago when Ranjit and I discussed the proposal of acquiring Khali in Almora jail.<sup>3</sup> He had come to pay me a visit. At that time I was thinking of some such place where Mummie might be able to live during the summer for it was obvious that she could not stay in the plains even if she recovered.

I have been here just a day and a night and the weather has not been as good as it might be. I have not seen the snows yet from Khali because of the clouds and there has been some rain. But already I am enchanted with the place. I like the situation of the house on a hill-top. To the east and west there are deep valleys winding away with streaks of water shining in the sunlight. To the north-east there is Binsar hill dominating the neighbourhood. To the north there is the snow range which I have not seen yet. The house itself is a solid neatly built structure, not very big but big enough for half a dozen persons to live in comfort. There are plenty of small cottages and outhouses. Round about are stately deodars and pines and oak trees and two magnificent eucalyptus trees. I had never seen such huge eucalyptus trees before. Among the trees the pines predominate and they give the peculiar and pleasant pine smell. But for stateliness it is difficult to beat the deodar and the whisper of the wind as it passes through them is extraordinarily soothing.

Ranjit has worked hard here during the past two years and more. It was jungle when he came and the house was full of bats and hardly habitable. There was lack of water. The sole use that Jamnalalji, who owned the place previously, found for the trees was to cut them down. The cut stumps of fine old deodar trees are mute witness to the tragedy, so also other stumps here and there.

Now the jungle has been cleared off and a farm and orchard have taken their place. There is prospect of green fields with the growing crops swaying gracefully in the wind. Hundreds of fruit trees are dotted about

1. Indira Gandhi Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. Nehru stayed at Khali, Almora, from 10 to 26 March 1938. See also *Selected Works*, Vol. 8, pp. 873-876.

3. See *Selected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 348.

and there must be dozens of varieties of good fruits. Just at present many of these trees are bare for they have not wholly recovered from the winter. But already some are full of bloom, notably the peach trees and apricots. The peach flowers are a mass of purple or rather mauve. Little birds are peeping out of the other fruit trees and probably within two or three weeks they will also be in full bloom. And in the summer they will have ripe rich fruit hanging in abundance from the branches. There will be apples and pears, peaches and apricots, oranges and tangerines, grapes and cherries, plums and mulberries, strawberries and raspberries, pumeloos and pomegranates, walnuts and almonds, chestnuts and persimmons—what a list! Imagine living in this abundance and I have not exhausted the list—for instance there are greengages and nectarines also and probably some others I cannot remember. All these fruits will not appear this year but a good number will. Many of the trees have been obtained from Kashmir and even foreign countries and are specially selected varieties.

The farm contains—wheat, barley, oats, rice, Indian corn, *bajra*, peanuts—*मूंगफली*—and some varieties of local grains.

Of the flowers I shall not give a list—It would be far too long. Just at present it is too early for most of them. But in April they will be in all their glory and will form brilliant and vivid patches of colour all round the house. Apart from the ordinary annuals there are special varieties of rose creepers, wistaria, Kashmir varieties of lilac and dahlias and gladioli and iris and daffodils and wall-flowers. There are innumerable other varieties—The daffodils are out now and put up a brave show. The acacias are also in full bloom. I imagine that before I go down in a fortnight many more flowers will come out.

Among the new trees Ranjit has planted Kashmir chenars and poplars.

It is fascinating to go round the garden and farm with Ranjit. He takes a personal and individual interest in almost each tree and flowering plant. He tends it and watches it grow like a child. I remembered what a vast difference it makes if one personally takes this interest in a garden. In Almora prison every plant was a friend of mine whose fortunes I followed with a certain degree of excitement. It was a great thing to see the new buds shoot forth and peep out into a new world. They had their own way of looking round, just as human babies have. Some were bright and alert, some quite impish, some dull. Every morning and evening I visited every plant and noted the changes that were taking place and I knew exactly the number of flowers even that each plant had. I had a small garden of course and Ranjit has a fine expanse. But his love for flowers and trees is fascinating and delightful.

The lack of water here has been remedied by hard labour and a simple contrivance which pumps up the little water which trickles from a spring



below. There is now there a good water supply in the house. Soon there will be other improvements—electric light from a small motor or perhaps generated from power taken from the wind. And so on and so forth

There is another aspect of Khali which Ranjit has developed. Wool-spinning has been organised and a number of persons sit here all day spinning away. About a hundred of them in the surrounding villages take the wool to their homes to spin and bring it back. There is fine spinning and I see no reason why good *pashminas* should not be made here. Soon weaving will begin. The local government has taken over charge of this spinning and weaving

A school for children is in prospect.

Then there is bee-keeping and we get good honey, and cattle and a poultry farm.

Altogether this is an enchanting place with any number of pleasant walks under the pines and excursions to places nearby—Binsar is a famous place for its view of the snows and this is only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles from here. A longer excursion is to the Pindari glacier—six days easy march. Even Kailas and Manasarovar seem easy of access. The journey can be done in two weeks one way, though this would be hard going. Three weeks is the usual time taken.

I have told you all about Khali now—or a great deal about it. Enough at least to make you want to come here. Of course we shall come together some day.

Perhaps your Easter vacations will be soon upon you. You told me that you intended seeing England. Certainly do so. But I would suggest that as a rule it would be worthwhile to go to the continent for the vacations. You will anyhow get quite enough of the English atmosphere and tend to become unaware, rather insular, as I did. It is desirable to see the world from other spectacles and other points of view. Also that is the only time you will have to keep up foreign languages. Easter is not a bad time for the south of France.

Love,

Your loving  
Papua

## 11. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>

Khali  
15.3.1938

Darling Indu,

Lying in the sun here, imbibing warmth and energy, I allow my mind to

1. Indira Gandhi Papers, N M M L.

wander. For the moment I am far from the daily work and worry, although some of it pursues me here I can afford to think of other matters and to dream a little. So I evolved plans of your meeting me at my landing place—Venice or Genoa. From there we might go to Vienna and then, why not?, Budapest. Having gone thus far it seemed a pity not to go a few steps further to Istanbul. But it was rather far. Anyway Prague was indicated and from there to Munich to have another look at the Deutsches museum. To Switzerland then and Paris and England. That was one route. Others vaguely impressed themselves on my mind. It was pleasant to form these airy programmes. Another bright idea struck me. Why should I not return to India via Russia, Tadzhikistan and Afghanistan!

Foolish fancies! Even in this remote place news has reached of Hitler's coup in Austria and all my peace and quiet have vanished and the relaxation given place to tension. Is it war? Or if not right now, when will it begin and drown the world in blood and ruins? What will happen to you and me when this comes? Will I have news of you? We do not get newspapers here regularly. They come irregularly two or three days after issue. For aught I know the fatal step might have been taken. But whether it has been taken already or not, we live on the brink of it, and the making of programmes seems folly. I suppose I shall not know till the last few days definitely whether I am going to Europe. But I will go unless some insuperable attack intervenes.

Meanwhile I take the sun and have my fill of the snows and the mountains.

I find from one of your letters that your term ends on June 20th. When is it possible to meet me, at the earliest, in Paris or in Venice? This will give me some idea and I can draw up my programme accordingly.<sup>2</sup>

I do not know how you have been keeping. I think you ought to take yourself in hand scientifically and get rid of your minor ailments. They are not inevitable, and it is foolish to become a slave to them. There is nothing radically wrong with you, as the doctors have frequently said. But you are not strong enough and this means that your powers of resistance to disease and infection are not adequate. Perhaps you have inherited this lack of resisting power from Mummie. Let us recognise it and provide for it.

Do you know that my grandfather died young probably of T.B.<sup>3</sup> So also one of my aunts<sup>4</sup> (father's sister). When Dadu was born there was fear of his getting T.B. He never got it largely because he made up his

2 Nehru was in Europe from June to November 1938

3. Nehru's grandfather, Ganga Dhar, died in 1861

4 The reference is probably to Patram

mind not to. From boyhood up he looked after his health, took exercise &c. And so he developed a remarkably fine constitution. He suffered a great deal from asthma but this did not touch his strong constitution and almost to the last he was strong and generally healthy. I was a weak and rather sickly child and had numerous ailments during my infancy and childhood. Later I kept good health and for a long term of years I was not seriously ill. All the time I was at Harrow, Cambridge and London I never had occasion to consult a doctor except once when I was hurt at football and another time for my baldness! This was partly due, I suppose, to having inherited a good constitution from Dadu, but partly also to my care of myself. By care I do not mean a morbid interest in my body. I never had that. But I did follow some simple rules of health—exercise, good sleep, simple food, for the rest as much work as I liked. Some people imagine that I am neglectful of myself and are full of good advice. As a matter of fact I have stood the strain of heavy work, gaol &c of the last 18 years remarkably well and I am far fitter today than many of my old friends who have lived an easy and comfortable life and have swallowed innumerable pills and concoctions. I have kept well because I continued to follow my simple rules—they become a habit—and never worried about myself or took to medicine. Also I can adapt myself to changing circumstances, like gaol &c. I have worked very hard but, curiously enough, I have succeeded in benefiting both mentally and physically from the changes that have come my way. I suppose there is a psychological reason for this as they fitted in with my mood and so did not oppress me as they might have done. But there is the simple and somewhat disciplined life also.

All this long account may bore you. But I want you to think about the matter and lay the foundations for good health and vitality. Do not rely too much on medicines &c. Of course sometimes one has to take them. Do not bother about your body. But just get into the habit of following some rules.

Three things you must do. 1. Keep your bowels functioning and do not get constipated. Laxatives are no good except in emergencies. It is food and exercise that should help

2. Accustom yourself to good breathing. This is very important and very few people realise it. Good breathing means a continuous purification of the blood and so the whole system is being toned up. For you specially this is important as you should strengthen your lungs. No complicated exercises are necessary. Just two. Quick breathing in and out for a short while, as you might have seen me do, and regular long breaths in and out slowly taken. You can do this for a few minutes any time. But early in

the morning on rising, and also before retiring for the night, you should do this.

3. Keep your body flexible—It is flexible now because of your youth but it is surprising how soon it stiffens if you do not take care. So take some easy stretching exercises and some for the abdomen which will help in digestion &c. Stretch as you like.

It seems rather silly for a normal human being to take these artificial exercises. But then none of us leads a normal life in the modern world. We are highly artificial and so we must make up for this.

I would not advise you to do the *shūrshasana*. But you should do the *sarvangasana* regularly. This is a wonderful exercise for the backbone and for toning up. Your backbone is weak. Do not do it for too long and don't feel tired after it. It is better to do it several times for a minute each. Also try to do the abdomen exercise which you have seen me do.

सांस निकालकर पेट पिचकाना ज़रा आगे झुक कर ताकि पेट तने नहीं। पहले खाली अन्दर बाहर — फिर खाली बाएँ तरफ — फिर खाली दहने तरफ — फिर बारी बारी से दहने बाएँ — फिर एक तरह से घुमाकर गोया कि पेट की मालिश अपने आप की जाती है।<sup>6</sup>

If you do these simple exercises in the morning you will feel the better for them. At night before retiring, you will sleep well. But do them all gently and do not overstrain or tire yourself. A little regularly done is quite enough. Ten or fifteen minutes in the morning and five minutes at night are quite enough. In any event do not forget the breathing which should be done in fresh air.

What a curious place Europe is getting! There is hardly room for a decent person in large parts of it. Gunther when he was here asked me if I had selected a quiet corner for myself to provide for the day when the world was overrun by fascism! I thought of Khali immediately. But there are no safe refuges for the likes of us.

I enclose a small note<sup>6</sup> for Madan Bhai. Please send it to him. I do not know his address.

All my love,

Your loving  
Papu

Mridula and Bharati are coming here tomorrow. After spending a few days here they will take a house in Almora for a month or so. Mridula has overworked herself at the Haripura Congress and is unwell. She was the head of the women volunteers—800 strong.

5. Breathe out, pull the abdomen inside bending forward a little so that it is not stiffened. First only inside and outside—then only to the left side—then only to the right side—then alternately to the right and left sides—then move the abdomen in a kind of circle so that it gets automatically massaged.

6 Not available

## 12. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>

Almora

27.3.38

Darling Indu,

It is some days since I wrote to you. And now my holiday in the hills has ended and I am on my way down. It has been a good holiday and I feel the better for it. If outside news had not come to interfere with my peace of mind, it would have been a perfect holiday. There was the news of Austria and Spain and all over Europe. There were the communal conflicts and, in particular, the riot at Allahabad<sup>2</sup> which was peculiarly brutal. But I have survived these occurrences and return in better form than I have been for a long time. It is true that no amount of physical rest can relieve the mind of its burdens and worries

I came down from Khali today. On the way we stopped to see the Brewsters who live on the outskirts of Almora. Do you remember Brewster who accompanied Dhan Gopal Mukherji in 1930 and stopped at our home? He is an artist and a Buddhist scholar. At his home we met Mrs. Peurose, a French woman who is a dancer and a great admirer of Indian spirituality. She is a friend of Madame Morin.

We are now spending the night with Bosi and Gertrude Sen. Perhaps you remember them also. He is a scientist and she is an ex-editor of *Asia* and is an American. Their house is perfectly appointed and it is soothing to stay in such a place.

In my last letter I sent you a deal of advice on matters pertaining to health. Here is another tip. Put a little butter in each of your nostrils and sniff it up. This had better be done at night before going to bed. This is excellent and prevents colds as it greases the passages.

I am going to Lucknow—then to Allahabad and Calcutta.<sup>3</sup>

I am feeling frightfully sleepy.

Love,

Papu

1 Indira Gandhi Papers, N.M.M.L.

2 The army had to be called in to control the situation.

3 Nehru visited Calcutta to attend the Congress Working Committee meeting from 1 to 6 April 1938.

13. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>

Allahabad

8.4.38

Darling,

You are becoming a confirmed Londoner and even in your holidays you stick to London. I have myself a partiality for London but then I have a partiality for so many places I rather regret now all the time I spent in London during my student days. I wish I had visited other places then. The chance does not come often in after life.

I am beginning to get invitations for week-end parties in England. I think I wrote to you that Stafford Cripps had asked me to his country-house. Lothian has now invited you and me and reminded me again that his country-house is one of the most beautiful houses in England. Krishna Menon will probably object to my going to Lothian. He is one of his antipathies. I dislike his politics also but I see no reason why I should not visit him and meet some interesting people. But all this is in the air as I refuse to fix up any date for my departure. I do not usually function in this way but somehow I like playing about with this idea. I suppose I had better fix things up soon.

Between the P & O and the Lloyd Triestino there is not much to choose and yet I suppose the latter is preferable. The *Conte Rosso* sails from Bombay on 14th June and reaches Venice on the 25th. These dates would suit me. It is difficult for me to leave earlier and—another advantage—the off-season fares begin on the 14th. There will be the monsoon but that is a trivial affair.

In one of my letters I had suggested that you might meet me in Venice and we might wander a little on the continent. But Agatha writes that if I go to London late in July most people will be away. It might thus be desirable for me to go more or less direct to England, perhaps just breaking journey in Paris for a day. If so it will hardly be worthwhile for you to go to Venice. I have asked Krishna Menon about it.

I am enclosing a little essay I wrote last night.<sup>2</sup> It has been sent to *The Modern Review*. Will you pass it on to Krishna Menon after you have read it? He is collecting such oddments

Love,

Your loving  
Papu

1 Indira Gandhi Papers, N M M L

2 *Escape* See *Selected Works*, Vol 8, pp 873-876

14. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>

Allahabad  
13.4.38

Darling Indu,

The people of Allahabad have been distinguishing themselves by breaking each other's heads and sometimes stabbing each other. Or at any rate a few of them have done so and nearly all the rest have sat tight in their homes, shivering with fright. It has not been a pleasant sight. There was a recrudescence of communal trouble three days ago and I have spent all my time in walking up and down the narrow lanes of Allahabad city. Fortunately normality has almost been restored.

I am now thinking of sailing on June 2nd and reaching Genoa on the 14th. But this is not settled yet. As soon as it is I shall send a cable to Krishna. I suppose I had better go almost straight to England, but I would like to spend a day in Paris *en route*. Your term will still be on and so you will not be able to meet me anywhere except perhaps in London. One of the reasons which induces me to reach England earlier is to see you at Oxford in term time

I cannot say anything about the length of my stay in Europe. I take it, it will be about 2½ months apart from the voyage from and to India. I might spend 3 weeks in England to begin with and a fortnight later. About my programme Krishna had better take charge but you might have a look in. I do not like the idea of touring about delivering speeches. I have had enough of this kind of thing here. Of course I shall have to do a little speaking in any event, but the less of it the better.

Krishna had better fix up my place of stay also in London. Anywhere will do but I must say I am not frightfully enamoured of the medieval atmosphere of artillery mansion. I suppose Mount Royal also is not desirable. But really it does not matter much where I go.

There is no chance, or hardly any, of *Puphi* accompanying me to Europe.

Love,

Papu

1 Indira Gandhi Papers, N M M.L.

15. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>Allahabad  
30.4.38

Indu darling,

Your letter of the 23rd has just come. I wrote to you last night and sent you a cheque. Money must have been cashed to you also today. I am sorry you were inconvenienced for lack of funds.

Latin seems to be your weak spot. It is a nuisance to have to carry on with it and I hope that after mods are done with finally you will have no more Latin examination. Your failing to pass does not matter much as you can easily get through it at the end of term. But I am sorry for it as this means an additional burden on you this term. Fortunately the term is a short one and you will soon be rid of the burden.

Your Latin examination might affect my programme. Agatha suggests that I should loiter somewhere on the continent till you are free. She further suggests that you might come over to Paris after your examination and meet me there and spend two or three days quietly in Paris. Agatha is optimistic if she imagines that I shall have much quiet in Paris. Still the idea is not bad if you approve of it. I seem to remember however that Stafford Cripps wanted me to go for a week-end to his country-house about the 25th June. Nothing was fixed up as my programme was uncertain. Now that I am going by the earlier boat Krishna will probably want me to accept Stafford Cripps' invitation. Anyway it is for you and Krishna to decide when I am to reach London—I shall loiter about on the continent if that is required of me. From Genoa I can go to Riviera or to Paris. You will let me know.

I am not surprised at your feeling strongly about Lothian. I feel more or less the same way. I know about the Cliveden set<sup>2</sup> and Lothian's pro-fascist and pro-Hitler activities. I think they are dangerous. But still after careful consideration I decided to accept his invitation. In effect I had done so over two years ago and I had repeated my acceptance later. It is a long-standing promise and I do not want to break it. But I would have refused in spite of that old promise if I had been convinced that it was the wrong thing for me to do. I happen to be something more than a prominent leader of a group or party. I have a special position in India and a certain international status. I have to function as such whatever my personal likes and dislikes might be. If anybody thinks that by

1 Indira Gandhi Papers, N M M L

2 In the late 1930s the shaping of the policy of appeasement was greatly influenced by the 'Cliveden set' to which belonged Geoffrey Dawson, editor of *The Times*, J L Garvin, editor of *The Observer*, and Lord Lothian. Cliveden was the country home of the Astor family.



my visiting Lothian I am betraying my cause, or adding to Lothian's prestige, or tarnishing my own reputation I cannot help it. I happen to know something about my work and I am not unacquainted with international affairs. I have to judge what I should do and should not do, after consulting others of course. And I am quite clear in my own mind that I cannot say no to Lothian so far as accepting his invitation is concerned. If I am so weak as to be influenced by him then I am not much good anyway. It may be that I am in a stronger position to counter him later. I feel therefore that I should accept. Indeed I have done so already. I shall be sorry if you are unable to accompany me.

It is quite possible that Linlithgow might want to meet me in England. I am not keen on seeing him but if he expresses a wish to see me I shall not refuse. Last time when I was in London I made it clear that I was not seeking any interview with anybody but I was prepared to meet anyone who wished to see me, regardless of his political affiliations, whether he was a diehard Conservative or Communist. I made only one exception—that I would not meet people connected with the Government, because the Government was responsible for what was happening in India then. I did not make any exceptions about individuals. So I met Conservatives and diehards who were not in the Government. But I refused to meet Cabinet ministers, such as Halifax and Zetland. Generally speaking my attitude will be the same this time but I might relax over members of the Government as the position in India is slightly different.<sup>3</sup>

I have hastened to answer your letter as I wanted to tell you how I felt about this matter.

Love,

Your loving  
Papu

3 In fact on this visit Nehru met Zetland, Linlithgow, Lothian and Halifax. See also *Selected Works*, Vol 9, p 202

## 16. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>

Srinagar (Garhwal)

May 4, 1938

Darling Indu,

Here we are—Nan, Raja and I—not far, so far as the map goes, from the rest of the world and yet cut off from it to an extraordinary degree.

1 Indira Gandhi Papers, N M M L

This letter is supposed to go by air and yet it will be taken first by runners and then by motor bus and then by train till it reaches the airline. We have had two unusual days. Yesterday morning we reached Hardwar. As usual there was no proper staff work and we did not know what our programme was going to be except that an aeroplane was waiting for us. Our luggage could not go by it nor Upadhyaya and I did not relish the idea of being stranded in the mountains without any luggage. Nan also was not well and I did not want to add to her troubles. So I decided to fly to Badrinath and Kedarnath and come back to Hardwar and then start afresh for Garhwal.

We had a good flight following the course of the Ganga and the Alaknanda—We went to Kedarnath first and went fairly near to the snowy peaks and then returned. Then Badrinath which was grander. We did not and could not descend, nor did we actually see the temples I was not very interested in them. The high peaks going up to 23000 feet attracted me. We returned to a place called Gochar which is the nearest landing ground to Badrinath—it is five or six days journey by road. The whole trip so far had taken us 2½ hours and we had covered nearly 200 miles, or somewhat less. At Gochar we had a meeting and addresses and food, spending nearly three hours there. And then back by plane to Hardwar. In the course of a few hours we had flown about 270 miles and done a journey which on foot (and there is no other way) takes five weeks. The difference was a measure of the gap between the new world and the old.

The flying was good but we had a few good humps when we suddenly came across airpockets or currents in the valleys. Once I shot up and banged my head against the roof of the cabin. Nan, however, did not have a happy time and was thoroughly sick on both journeys.

On return to Hardwar we drew up our programme afresh and left by car for Devprayag, a journey of 57 miles by a very tortuous mountain road. We reached there at dusk and spent the night there is a *panda's* house, which was not bad and was beautifully situated on a high precipice overhanging the Alaknanda. What is the Alaknanda? You will ask, ignorant one! I was myself rather vague on the subject till a day or two ago. Well I shall tell you. At Devprayag two rivers meet—the Bhagirathi and the Alaknanda and both together are then called Ganga. The real Ganga, so named, starts from Devprayag from where it goes down to Rishikesh and Hardwar and beyond. Both are thus the Ganga in a sense but usually the Bhagirathi is considered the Ganga proper and this comes from Gangotri, the source of the Ganga. I have not been to Gangotri nor did we fly that way yesterday although I saw the Gangotri winding away between the hills above Devprayag. The Alaknanda we followed by air right up to its sources, Badrinath and Kedarnath.

This morning I had a dip in the Alaknanda at Devaprayag. The right place was the junction with the Bhagirathi but this was a mile away and I wanted to save time. The current of the Alaknanda (and even more so of the Bhagirathi) was so strong and the stones so slippery that it was not possible to go more than a few feet from the bank. But even so the water was delightfully cold and refreshing.

This morning we started from Devaprayag on ponies and rode about 19 miles. It was fairly hot going and we were rather tired at the end of it. Almost right through we followed the course of the Alaknanda. Many pilgrims, looking tired and footsore, were trudging away to Badrinath, with the prospect of another month's journey before them. It seemed strange that we had done this very journey by air in a few hours day before. Our bridle path was a good one and a pleasant and sometimes heavy scent of jasmine hung along it.

We reached here soon after noon long before our luggage. This eventually arrived after seven in the evening. This (Srinagar) is a pleasant little place, rather warm (we are only about 2000 ft. high or perhaps 2500) and with an atmosphere of isolation surrounding it. Everybody here has got one major desire—to have a motor road connecting Srinagar with the outside world, a very legitimate wish. Another wish, rapidly taking form and entirely right, is to develop electric power. In a hill country with numerous rivers and waterfalls this is the obvious thing but our Government have never thought along these lines. They only make roads and think of electricity for the hill stations where the officials go to. And because officials seldom come this way this poor spread-out district of the U.P., bordering on Tibet, has been grossly neglected.

We shall remain here two days and then go to Pauri, a hill station 6000 ft. high, which is the headquarter of the district and is 8 miles away from here. From there we shall go to Devaprayag and Hardwar and back to the better known but more drab world.

It is very pleasant here in the late evening. Just cool enough. Some of the hill-sides have fires on them, internationally caused, as this is supposed to improve the soil. The burnt grass and shrubs make good manure when the rains come. It is a poor country and there are few forests, the hill-sides are almost bare. In spite of the abundance of rivers, there is lack of water for the fields, although simple pumps could give enough for the fields. When I go back from here I shall add yet another picture to the long gallery in my mind—that of Garhwal, poor and neglected but full of great possibilities, if scientifically tackled. What an enormous number of things we have to do in India when once we get going

The Alaknanda runs some distance down below us. Early tomorrow morning I hope to have a good dip in it. The current is not so strong

here and it will be easier to sprawl about. I am looking forward to it.  
Love,

Your loving  
Papu

## 17. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>

Lucknow  
21.5.38

Darling Indu,

The days are slipping by and very soon I shall be on board speeding away to the West. I have just come here from Bombay. Three days in Lucknow—three days in Allahabad—a day in Panchgani to see Jal—three days in Bombay, and then I sail.

I went to see Jal day before yesterday. I flew from Bombay to Poona and from there to Panchgani by car. Our plane did not function well and so after flying for 15 or 20 minutes we returned to the Juhu aerodrome and changed over to another plane.

I was shocked to see Jal. He was thin and emaciated and in continuous pain. I am afraid there is not much chance of his recovering. And yet there is just one chance and probably we shall know within two or three weeks. Jal's case is a very sad one. He really is one of the very few men who could and were likely to play an important role in India. There are hardly any important industrialists who think like him or have big ideas. Just before his illness he had been made a director of Tata's Steel Works—a big position. And then he is so straight and fundamentally solid. I am very depressed about him. In spite of the shortness of time at my disposal I have decided to pay him another visit before I leave. Poor Malati's<sup>2</sup> case is pitiable.

I am getting the endorsement for Spain. There has been no difficulty. Congress Governments are useful at times. What will happen to me after I land at Genoa, I do not know. I await Krishna's instructions. If I have an odd day or so I should like to go to the Riviera. I have told you—have I not?—that I am travelling first in great luxury on the Lloyd Triestino boat—the *Biancamano*.

When will I see you my dear? On the 22nd just after your examination is over? If it is to be later you might join me in Paris.

1 Indira Gandhi Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. Malati Naoroji, wife of Jal Naoroji.

Nan is in Mussoorie—She is bringing Chand to Bombay to have her eyes attended to We shall meet before I sail.

Love,

Papu

# 18. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>

Wardha  
10.12.38

Darling Indu,

I hope your packing has been completed without fatiguing you too much. I am afraid you have not had as much rest in Allahabad as we had hoped. You realise of course that you have undertaken a biggish job—to build up your health on an unshakable foundation. This is not easy unless tackled in a businesslike way. You have got an excellent chance to do so. The real difficulty is that you might slacken your vigilance because you feel a little better. This getting tired easily must be conquered. It is not good enough to go through life in a physically tired condition with occasional illness. I hope therefore that you will apply your will and determination to get fit rapidly and carry out a regime of rest &c. in Almora. Probably it will be desirable to spend the first three days almost completely in bed. Then three days of small walks—on the level—in the morning and evening with long rests for the rest of the time in bed or on an easy chair. Do not go in for walking up and down the hill. For three days you had better walk in your garden, which I presume you will have. Later, when you feel better, you can venture out. But remember in any event to

- (1) Take your temperature morning and evening.
- (2) Three hours rest in the afternoon and some rest before and after meals
- (3) If you feel tired increase your rest. Also if there is any rise in temperature.

You had better take a new supply of your tonics with you from Allahabad as you may not get them in Almora.

<sup>1</sup> Indira Gandhi Papers, N M M L.

From 9 to 16 December, Nehru was at Wardha to attend the Congress Working Committee meeting

So far as I can remember, your house is beautifully situated on the Khali road, with a gorgeous view of the snow. I am convinced that you will prosper there. Take care not to catch chills. Be well clad and covered.

When you go Anand Bhawan will be unoccupied and all our mail will go to Swaraj Bhawan. Inform the A.I.C.C. office to forward your letters to Almora. No other address is necessary but if you find out from Girish Chandra Joshi<sup>2</sup> the name of the house, you can give this, and also write it to me. On arrival at Almora write to the Post Office and Telegraph Office telling them of your existence and address.

I do not know how long I shall be here. In any event I am here till the 14th evening, perhaps till the 15th. Then Bombay. I shall try to reach Allahabad on the 21st night.

I picked up the December *Lilliput* at the Nagpur station. I am posting it to you.

Take your weight before you leave Allahabad.

Love,

Papu

2 Executive Officer of the Almora Municipal Board at this time.

## 19. To Indira Nehru<sup>1</sup>

In train—Bombay-Allahabad  
22-12-38

Darling Indu,

It is long since I wrote to you—ten long days or even more. And yet every day I felt the urge as I thought of you, and words and phrases tumbled over each other in my mind. Several times I took pen in hand and was on the point of beginning, but bodily weariness overcame me and I said to myself: Let it be tomorrow when I am fresher in body and spirit. I have not been keeping as well as I ought to be and some kind of a chill or cold, or perhaps a mild dose of flu, has pursued me from Wardha onwards resulting in a bad throat and occasional fever. A day's full rest in bed would have suppressed this distemper, but instead of this I sat for long weary hours in Committee, with aching limbs and fevered brow. Gradually I conquered this passing trouble and I am much better now. Friends pressed me to stay another day or two in Bombay to rest and get fitter for the journey. They did not realise that I can get better rest in a railway train during a long journey when no one knows

1 Indira Gandhi Papers, N M.M.L.

that I am travelling and hence there is no interference—provided of course I travel in a higher class than usual. And so I am seated now in lordly fashion in a second-class coupe, all by myself, after having had a long and restful sleep.

But I am writing about myself when my mind hungers for news of you, I have had none for many days, except a brief reference in Betty's letter to Raja. I was glad of this morsel though I wish there was more of it. I hope it is well with you, and the sight and cold air of the snow-covered mountains is filling you with vitality and strength. Vicariously I take joy in that prospect and I plan a visit when I can be with you and the mountains. I have refused so many engagements but the wave of life encircles me and makes me prisoner. I had hoped to keep the first half of January free. It is no longer so. The Working Committee meets again in January—on the 7th, 8th and 9th—in remote Bardoli. In the second half of January other demands are made on me but so far I have resisted them. I still hope to reach Khali, or wherever you might be, about the middle of January. I must have this respite for body and mind before the Congress session, and yet I dare not feel certain about it, lest the mocking gods trip me up again and entangle me in their snares.

From now to the middle of January my days are terribly full. Three days in Allahabad (December 23rd to 25th) with an important conference of Congress Muslims and numerous other activities and a hundred letters clamouring for answer. There will be many guests in Anand Bhawan. On the 25th night I go to Lucknow for a day, on the 27th to Fyzabad for the Provincial Conference over which I am presiding. I shall be in Fyzabad for five days and I am not looking forward to this visit. It will mean a great strain.

On January 1st I go from Fyzabad to Calcutta direct. Two days there attending All India Students Conference and Keshab Chandra Sen's centenary gathering. Probably on January 4th Santiniketan if Gurudev is there. Leave that evening for Bombay travelling right across India. Reach Bombay 6th January morning—various meetings there. Leave same night for Bardoli where I stay for 3 days—January 7, 8, 9. Back in Allahabad January 11th night—Some important meetings there on January 12th. Probably leave Allahabad on January 13th night for Lucknow, spend a day there and proceed to Kathgodam and beyond. If all this works out I should reach Khali on January 15th evening. I should like to spend two weeks there or at least ten days.

Please write to me so as to catch me in various places where I go to. Address in Fyzabad—C/o Provincial Conference. In Calcutta—C/o Dr. B. C. Roy, 36 Wellington Street, Calcutta.

In Bombay I have been having a novel experience in presiding over the Planning Committee. It is a very mixed crew—big business, professors, economists, scientists, Government ministers, and odd people. Rather out of my line and therefore more fatiguing than other activities, but full of interest and instruction for me. Whatever the Planning Committee might achieve, it will certainly add to my education, and though I grow old I have not lost the knack of learning and filling the enormous gaps in my mind. By the time I grow decrepit with age and weary of this business of life, when I am even more querulous, intolerant than I am now, and have lost all the strength and vitality that I still possess, and bent-backed stumble forward painfully, supported by you, my dear, by that time, perhaps, I shall be full of wisdom. But what will it avail me then when the power to act has gone? *Si jeunesse savait Si vieillesse pouvait?*<sup>2</sup>

Many years ago I used to dream that when you grew up, you also would play a brave part in what is called public life in India, to shoulder this heavy burden, to help in putting brick upon brick in the building of the India of our dreams. And I wanted you to train and fit yourself in body and mind for this engrossing task. But I am not sure that I desire you to do this now, and to experience the heartache and the crushing of the spirit that this involves. Each one of us has enough of burden to carry; do we do much good by shouldering the burdens of others? Yet we may not and cannot escape them. But perhaps it is better for us to function in a limited sphere that we understand and to serve India in that restricted field rather than presume to enter the wide expanse of Indian humanity. For me there is no escape, no refuge, till the inevitable escape that comes to us all. But why should I encourage others who are dear to me to enter into this heart-breaking business?

What am I writing to you? Instead of cheering you, I am writing depressing stuff, the outcome of a slightly disordered and fevered mind. But this will pass soon enough and I shall write to you more cheerful letters.

How do you stand as regards money? You have not got much. Let me know how much you require for the next three weeks or so till I come up.

Tell Betty that I have given heavy work to Raja.<sup>3</sup> This will keep him fully occupied for the next fortnight. After that he will have a brief respite but not for long. I have suggested to him to accompany me to Khali when I go up in mid-January.

2. If youth knew, and if old age could!

3. Hutheesing had been entrusted with the work of coordinating the reports of the various sub-committees set up by the National Planning Committee.



Give my love to Betty and the children, and for yourself, my dear, what more can I give you than what you have already?

Your loving  
Bapu

## 20. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

Allahabad  
27.2.42

Dear Bapuji,

Received your letter. You may of course write to me in Hindi but I often find it difficult to decipher your handwriting. In the last letter at one or two places I could not make out what you had written.

The affairs of the States people are in your hands. Whatever you advise we will do. Now Jamnalalji is not there. Balwantraji did not come and so the difficulty increased. Pattabhi's letter did not come to me. If there is no other alternative then the newspaper can be published from Masulipatnam itself.<sup>2</sup>

I am thinking of fixing 26 March, which is Ramnavmi, as the date for Indu's marriage. You might have probably seen the statement which I gave to the press.<sup>3</sup> Since something about it was published in the newspapers letters and telegrams started coming to me, Indu and Sarup expressing resentments and making complaints. Therefore I thought it proper to issue a statement.

I intend to perform the marriage ceremony very simply. But even if only very close friends and relations are invited the number becomes quite large. The list of invitees has already become 250, excluding the people of Allahabad and many more names are still occurring to me. I am unable to decide what to do. Probably most of the people seeing the present conditions will not come. Even so quite a large number of people may turn up.

Indu is happy and well. Krishna will be coming here after a week.

1 Pyarelal Papers, N.M.M.L. (Original in Hindi.)

2 In his letter of 23 February 1942, Mahatma Gandhi sought Nehru's advice regarding the office of the States People's Conference and its journal, *States' People*, and mentioned that Balwantraji Mehta, Jainarayan Vyas and Thakkar Bapa were not willing to accept the secretaryship, and that Pattabhi Sitaramayya had written that he could publish the paper from Masulipatnam.

3. For Nehru's statement to the press see *Selected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 623.

You must have read Chiang Kai-shek's statement.<sup>4</sup> It was not prepared at my suggestion or in consultation with me. I saw it at the eleventh hour—a little before his departure. He had written it on the previous night.

Mahadev wrote to me to Shantiniketan asking me whether or not the telegrams and letters written by you to Chiang Kai-shek should be published. That letter of Mahadev's was received by me day before yesterday after reaching here. I immediately wired to Mahadev saying that in my opinion the telegrams and letters should be published. Now there is no time to ask Chiang Kai-shek, nor do I think it very necessary. It will be well if they are published in the *Harijan*. Then other papers can reproduce from it. Or they can be released direct to the Associated Press.<sup>5</sup>

I came to know about Chandra Singh and Bhagirathi.<sup>6</sup>

I had sent Yunus to Prithvi Singh's<sup>7</sup> camp thinking that he could stay there for about a month and then go to Sevagram for a few days. But he is not well at all and is getting weaker every day. I got him examined by Kuvalyanand<sup>8</sup> and one more doctor also saw him. Everybody said that he should take complete rest. I have asked him to come away from the camp. For the time being he will stay in Bombay so that the doctors could observe him carefully. Badshah Khan has written that he should return to the Frontier.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

4 Chiang Kai-shek, who visited India from 9 to 24 February 1942, in his statement issued on 24 February said that India should give united support to the principles of the Atlantic Charter, but wondered why she should if they did not apply to her

5 The correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi and Chiang Kai-shek was not released to the press. For Mahatma Gandhi's letters to Chiang Kai-shek see *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. LXXV, pp 306-307 and 313

6 A social worker, was associated with the Mahula Ashram.

7 Baba Prithvi Singh Azad (b 1892), a Rajput revolutionary, joined the Ghadar Party in 1911; convicted in the Lahore Conspiracy Case and sentenced to life imprisonment; escaped from jail in 1922 but surrendered in 1938 at the insistence of Mahatma Gandhi and became his follower, participated in the Quit India movement; Director of the Institute of Physical Culture in Saurashtra

8 Kuvalyanand was making researches in the technique and benefits of *Hatha-yoga* exercises

## 21. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

Allahabad  
27.6.45

Dear Bapuji,

Got your letter of the 25th just now.<sup>2</sup> You have rightly written that to be in the Kasturba Memorial Trust or Hindustani Prachar is not a matter of honour but of work. It is obvious that my sympathies are with these works. But at present I cannot definitely say to what extent I have understood them or agree with their methods. Besides this, the fact is that at present I want as far as possible not to bind myself down to any particular work. For some time I want to look about. This is difficult because one willy-nilly does get involved. Even so, for the time being I want to remain somewhat detached. Therefore if you permit I would like not to be on any committee. Later on these problems can be considered carefully at leisure.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

1 Pyarelal Papers, N M M L (Original in Hindi.)

2. In his letter Mahatma Gandhi had asked Nehru if his name could be included in the Kasturba Memorial Trust, which meant working for women and children in villages in Mahatma Gandhi's way.

## 22. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

Near Gangabal Lake  
July 30, 1945

My dear Bapu,

For ten days now I have been wandering among the mountains and living the life after my heart.<sup>2</sup> Indira is with me. Our present trip is now drawing to a close and by day after tomorrow we shall reach Srinagar. We shall have trekked about 100 miles at altitudes varying from 9000 ft. to 14000. We have crossed a rather dangerous pass, seldom traversed, leading from one river valley to another. It was a tricky business, involving a good deal of ice-work, and a false step would have sent us 400 ft. below. However, we survived and felt rather elated over it all. This

1. Pyarelal Papers, N M M L.

2. Nehru visited Kashmir from 20 July to 21 August 1945 on medical advice

mountain trekking, skirting glaciers and going up and down several thousand feet every day, reaching our journey's end tired out but getting up next day fresh and refreshed, has done me an immense amount of good. Both my body and mind feel much better. I feel light-hearted and cheerful and the numerous worries and troubles that surround us seem far away. This is all very selfish I know for it is pure sensual enjoyment of the mountain air and the snow and the forests and the flowers which abound here. I rationalise it, of course, and try to convince myself that it is necessary for my bodily and mental health. There is some truth in that but not as much as I make out. I take refuge in doctors' advice. But the fact remains that I am here when I ought to be elsewhere. This morning I had a dip in the Gangabal, a lake at the foot of the Harmukh glacier. This is considered a particularly holy lake by the Kashmiri Brahmans. The holiness, I am afraid, did not attract me but I was curious to know how I would react to a dip in a glacier lake. Nearly 29 years ago I had bathed in this lake and I wondered how far age had enfeebled me for this purpose. Well, it was very cold, naturally, and I have got into the bad habit of taking warm baths. Nevertheless I enjoyed the dip and felt warm and refreshed afterwards.

Indira has stood this trek very well. She left her babe<sup>3</sup> at Pahalgam. We shall be in Srinagar day after tomorrow on the 1st August and I propose to spend a week there, full of engagements. After that a few days at Pahalgam and then return. (There is, I must confess, a vague idea at the back of my mind to visit the cave of Amarnath from Pahalgam. It is four days rapid journey there and back.) I hope to meet Maulana in Srinagar and then to fix up my programme definitely. Probably on my return journey I shall make brief halts in Peshawar, Lahore & Delhi. Badshah Khan is likely to be here next week & I shall meet him.

We have been far from post & telegraph offices and newspapers—a welcome change, but nevertheless a handicap. I hardly know what has happened during these days in India or elsewhere. A report has reached me that the Labour Party in Britain has won a thundering victory but I do not know the details yet.<sup>4</sup>

You may have seen in the papers repeated references to the possibility of my going to America. I have not encouraged these in any way and as far as I can see my business lies in India at present and in the near future. What I have said is that it is always possible that I might go abroad if the situation in India permits it. The situation here is so fluid that no

3. Rajiv Gandhi.

4. For Nehru's reaction to the victory of the Labour Party in the general elections see *Selected Works*, Vol. 14, pp. 62-63 and 387-388.

one can say what is likely to happen. The surprising and overwhelming victory of the Labour Party in Britain may have little significance for India—certainly most of the Labour leaders there are a poor lot so far as we are concerned. But it does indicate a great turnover of opinion both on domestic and international matters. In a sense it has a revolutionary significance but I doubt if the leaders there have anything resembling a revolutionary spirit.

I am enclosing a copy of an air letter I have received from Krishna Menon. This reached me in the course of my wanderings here. The letter speaks for itself and I have nothing to add to it. There is a mention in it of a previous letter which I have not received so far. Whether anything will come out of this I do not know, but it seems to me certainly worthwhile to encourage this attempt to improve the spinning wheel. May I request you to ask someone who knows all about our charkha economics & technique to write to Krishna Menon and answer his questions, as well as give such additional information as may be considered necessary? In order to save time, Krishna Menon should be addressed directly by air mail and, if possible, samples of yarn might also be sent by air mail. (I might add that an Air Letter—special forms to be obtained from the Post Office—goes more quickly than an ordinary air mail cover and is cheaper. But space is limited. In order to overcome this paucity of space 2 or 3 Air Letters can be sent.) If it is convenient, I should like to have a copy of the communication sent to Krishna Menon—His address is:

V.K. Krishna Menon  
India League  
165 Strand  
London W.C. 2  
England

Telegraphic address:

Krishnamenon  
165 Strand, London

I am writing this far from a post office, but I hope it will be posted tomorrow.

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal

My address till

August 8th—c/o Postmaster Srinagar

From 9th-15—c/o Postmaster Pahalgam Kashmir

I have not received any of the plans and specifications referred to in Krishna Menon's letter.

**23. To N.S. Hardikar<sup>1</sup>**

Allahabad  
December 3, 1945

My dear Hardikar,

Your letter of the 30th November. I have already expressed my views on this question on several occasions. The subject is a complicated one and requires careful handling. It is wrong to rush it through. Therefore I had suggested a postponement. Some kind of rail-road coordination is obviously desirable. It is also obvious that the old method of a large number of individual owners—competing against each other—was not good. There must be efficient functioning and in the interests of both the service and consumers. A coordinative basis of working may lead to this.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Pyarelal Papers, N.M.M.L

**24. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>**

Allahabad  
January 14, 1946

My dear Bapu,

I enclose a copy of a letter<sup>2</sup> from an American who was in the American army as an engineer and planning expert. He was in charge of building up a number of camps. He advised the Sriniketan people also and was put in a committee by the Bengal Government.<sup>3</sup> I was considerably impressed by him. He has the knowledge and training for his job, knows the latest technique, and at the same time understands the background of village India. He is attracted to India in many ways

1. Pyarelal Papers, N.M.M.L
2. In his letter of 19 December 1945, Albert Mayer had suggested, among other things, the replanning and redevelopment of a group of villages, building of houses in villages chiefly with materials locally available and production of adequately trained technicians in as large numbers as possible for a construction or reconstruction programme
3. He was a member of the Committee on the Improvement of Higher Technical Education set up by the Bengal Government

(even philosophically) and has got the urge to do something here without thinking in terms of monetary recompense. Because of this urge he may come back to India.

His idea was to experiment in a number of typical localities with village reconstruction and development, keeping Indian conditions in view. This was not to consist of just building but of helping in providing a corporate life for the people.

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal

## 25. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

Allahabad  
30-1-46

Dear Bapu,

Received your letter. I said something about the incidents which took place in Bombay concerning the Communists.<sup>2</sup> These are very wrong things that are happening and I think some people are getting these done from behind the scenes. It is true that these days public opinion is generally very much against the Communists. At several places they cannot hold even a meeting. But such large-scale attacks cannot take place without any special motive.

At the same time it has also to be kept in mind that the Communists have also often indulged in a lot of rioting. In this very month, in Kanpur, they resorted to violence as a result of which several of our people were injured.<sup>3</sup>

Of late the Muslim League has also been indulging in violence but now it is somewhat under control in comparison to the past. There has been some reaction against them among some Muslims too. In Allahabad a number of big processions of nationalist Muslims (that is, against the League) have been taken out.

1 Pyarelal Papers, N M M L (Original in Hindi)

2 On 23 January 1946, the printing press of the *People's Age* in Bombay was badly damaged and 40 Communists were injured in an attack on their headquarters. See also *Selected Works*, Vol 14, pp 231 and 547-548

3 On 2 January 1946, about a dozen persons were injured in a clash between the Congress and Communist workers at Bhairon Ghat in Kanpur while the two groups were proceeding to join the funeral of a worker of the Muir Mill.

Yesterday Sarup reached here. Her health is good and she is happy. I was a little indisposed. Now I am getting well.

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal

## 26. To Lord Pethick-Lawrence<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
8 April 1946

Dear Lord Pethick-Lawrence,

I am writing to you in my capacity as President of the All India States People's Conference. It is not without reluctance that I am addressing this communication to you as it was not our desire to ask for any kind of favour or to appear before you and your colleagues as advocates before some kind of a tribunal, but my Committee have come to the conclusion that it would be unfair to you and unfair to the vast numbers of the people of the States whom they have the honour to represent, if I did not put before you their feelings in regard to recent developments.

The All India States People's Conference is an organization which represents today the vast majority of the people of the States in India. Its affiliated and associated organizations exist in Hyderabad (Deccan), Jammu and Kashmir, Mysore, Travancore and Cochin, Baroda and the Gujarat and Kathiawar States, Gwalior, Indore and other States in Central India, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur and other States in Rajputana, the Deccan States, the Punjab States, the Himalayan Hill States, the Baluchistan States, the States in Orissa and Central Provinces, and Cutch. You will observe that we represent directly all the principal States in India as well as a very large number of the minor States. In effect we represent directly over 90 per cent of the area and population of the Indian States. If we presume, therefore, to speak on behalf of the people of the Indian States, we do so with authority and the sanction of the great organization which has active and functioning branches all over these States. Many of our States branches have a very large number of sub-branches in the towns and rural areas.

The All India States People's Conference held its annual session in December and January last at Udaipur in Rajputana. I am sending you a copy of the resolutions passed at this Conference as well as the revised constitution that was adopted there. I am also adding a translation of my presidential address at this Conference<sup>2</sup> These papers will give you

1. Pyarelal Papers, N M M L.

2. For Nehru's presidential address to the All India States People's Conference at Udaipur on 30 December 1945 see *Selected Works*, Vol. 14, pp 406-416



some idea of what this Conference stands for in regard to the States as well as the rest of India.

It is well known that there is an enormous difference in size, population, revenue and social conditions of these States. Nevertheless, they present some common problems and we have succeeded in bringing all of them together on a common platform, our objective being the attainment of full responsible government by the people of the States as an integral part of a free and federated India. We have stood for the unity and independence of India and for a common level of democratic freedom, civil liberty and administrative efficiency all over these States. It is well known that at the present moment nearly all of them are very backward in these respects. It is inevitable that only the larger States can form stable and progressive units of an Indian federation. The others will have to be absorbed in other units or possibly, where this is feasible and desirable, to group themselves in order to form a unit of the federation. In any event there must be a certain uniformity in the internal political and economic structure of the various units in the federation.

In our desire to make these backward States progress rapidly and bring them up to the level of the rest of India we have offered to co-operate with the Rulers. But that cooperation can only be for a common objective and for a rapid change. We welcomed the recent declaration made by the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes in favour of civil liberty.<sup>3</sup> We regret, however, that no marked changes have taken place in those States in spite of this declaration. All this does not fit in at all with the coming independence of India in which the people of the States must inevitably be sharers and partners. It fits in still less with the growing temper of the people of the States and their passion for freedom and reform. It must be remembered that there is no difference between the people of the States or of the provinces, and it is not possible to keep back one group while a similar adjoining group is moving forward.

In recent years there has been a very remarkable awakening of the people in the States in spite of all manner of obstructions and restrictions that have been placed in their way. They have put themselves in line with the nationalist urge for the independence of India and they have taken full part in the struggle for freedom. It is becoming increasingly difficult for them to be treated in a different manner from the people of the rest of India.

A very few of the States have certain partly elected assemblies. These assemblies are usually of an advisory character only and the nominated

3 See *Selected Works*, Vol. 14, pp. 423-426

element in them is strong. The franchise is often very limited. In effect the autocratic rule of the Princes continues. It is manifest that there is a vast difference between the vested interests and the feelings of the Rulers and the desire for freedom and urges of the people. The Rulers cannot give expression to the latter nor can they represent the people. Even with goodwill and good intentions they can only represent themselves and give expression to their individual views.

I have endeavoured, as briefly as possible, to inform you of the position in the States and of the representative character of the States People's organization of which I have the honour to be President. This organization is intensely interested in the future of the States. The States mean essentially the people who live there. The States minus the people are reduced to almost a nullity. Yet strangely enough the States seem to be treated as if they have no people there, or at any rate the 93,000,000 people are completely ignored. My Committee consider this a wrong and dangerous method to pursue, a method which can only lead to unfortunate consequences. If this is a shadow of things to come, then the future itself is dismal.

You will find from the resolutions that we passed at the Udaipur Conference what our proposals are for the future of the States.<sup>4</sup> In implementing these proposals many difficulties are bound to arise for we have to deal with one-third of India whose growth has been arrested for over a hundred years and where problems have piled up in consequence. We have to deal with relics of ancient feudalism which are completely out of place in the modern world. Nevertheless it has been our desire to find a way out by all peaceful means and in cooperation with the Rulers insofar as this may be available to us, but it is manifest that any delay in tackling this problem or any attempt to bypass it is full of danger. It is our view that many of these problems have arisen and have accumulated because an external authority, namely the British Power, has imposed its will upon the people of the States and prevented their growth as well as the natural adjustment between developing forces which would have taken place otherwise. With the removal of this external and imposed authority conditions are created which will lead to new adjustments and to a new equilibrium more in consonance with reality and modern conditions. We feel, therefore, that the first and urgent problem in the States, as in India as a whole, is the complete removal of this external authority. An independent India will be able to solve her problems with speed and with a large measure of goodwill and cooperation between the various elements in her population. We are convinced that the States problem will then be solved in cooperation between the

4. See *Selected Works*, Vol 14, pp 417-418.

people and the Rulers. Therefore, we think that the first preliminary to the consideration of this problem, as all others in India, is the clear acceptance of India's independence which would apply to the whole of India including the Indian States. We stand for the unity of India as a federation with autonomous units, but whatever shape the future constitution of India might take it should be determined by the people of India as a whole on the basis of the complete removal of the British authority. This, we should like to make clear, includes the removal from India of British armed forces, for there can be no freedom or independence with alien armies on the soil of India.

The All India States People's Conference has done me the honour of electing me its President, though I am not a resident of any of the States, because of my great interest in this question. The organization itself draws its strength from the people of the States themselves and it is my privilege, in the Standing Committee of the Conference, to be associated with the leaders of the people of the various States in India who can speak with authority on the part of their people.

It is well known that the Rulers of these States can hardly function as they want to, and they have to show a becoming subservience to the Political Department of the Government of India. The Rulers have often been made to function in many ways as the agents of that Department. Thus from no point of view can they be said to represent or be in a position to reflect the views and feelings of the people

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

## 27. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

Bombay  
9-7-46

Bapu,

You must have seen that two names for the Working Committee were changed later on and Sarat Babu was taken in <sup>2</sup> This was done with the approval of the Maulana. Vallabhbhai also liked it. I hope you will also approve it.

1 Pyarelal Papers, N.M.M.L. (Original in Hindi)

2 The Working Committee nominated by Nehru did not contain the names of Kripalani and Sarojini Naidu. See also *Selected Works*, Vol 15, pp 460-461

Today in the evening I heard that Sarojini's condition has become serious and her entire head has swollen. It is perhaps not a mere external swelling. The doctors think there might be something wrong inside. She is suffering.

I will go to Allahabad on the 11th night.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

## 28. Telegram to Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

Allahabad  
18 July 1946

Have received no communication from Kashmir. In view Maharaja's recent speech as reported no change in policy indicated. Please advise about future action.<sup>2</sup> Am going Delhi tomorrow.

Jawaharlal

1. Pyarelal Papers, N.M M L.

2. Nehru ultimately decided to go to Kashmir on 24 July 1946. See also *Selected Works*, Vol. 15, pp 402-403 and 413.

## 29. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

Delhi  
20-7-46

Dear Bapu,

Munshi gave me your letter. The subjects which you do not want to be discussed by the Committee will not be put on the agenda.<sup>2</sup> But every member has already given thought to these matters and they are in everyone's mind. Several members have prepared long notes too. Our proceedings will not be released to the press at all. When the Working Committee meets, these matters will be considered.

1. Pyarelal Papers, N.M M L. (Original in Hindi.)

2. In his letter of 17 July 1946, Mahatma Gandhi mentioned that K.M. Munshi had shown him the rules of procedure in the Constituent Assembly and had a long talk with him about grouping and said what Munshi "has prepared after seven days' labours may not be placed before the Committee."

Regarding the Constituent Assembly I am more than ever convinced that we should work in such a manner that the Assembly should in no way be concerned with the British Government.<sup>3</sup> We have to keep it independent and there should be no interference in its working by the Parliament or Viceroy and if possible by the Federal Court. If ever there is an interference by the Federal Court it cannot be helped but the effort should be to prevent it. However, these things cannot be discussed fully in a letter. I shall talk about them when we meet.

After receiving the Viceroy's letter I decided today to go to Kashmir. Vallabhbhai also gave this advice.

I, too, want that the Working Committee should meet soon. When and where do you want it to meet?<sup>4</sup>

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

3. In the same letter Mahatma Gandhi, criticising Nehru's statement of 10 July 1946 in which he had said that the Congress would enter the Constituent Assembly "completely unfettered by agreements", said that they had to work within the limits of the State Paper and that as they had given it their own interpretation they would have to be firm even if the Federal Court gave it a different interpretation
4. The meeting of the Working Committee took place in Wardha from 8 to 13 August 1946

### 30. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
20-8-1946

Dear Bapu,

Here the situation changes daily and it is not known yet what will be the final decision. It might be known probably in two or three days. In my last talk with you I had said that Rajendra Babu should be the President either of the Constituent Assembly or of the Congress. I had in mind particularly the Congress. Therefore I did not want him to join the Interim Government. But here others felt strongly that he should be in this Government. Then I gave in.

I wanted the Maulana also to join the Interim Government. I pleaded much with him but he did not agree. Then he said that if people wanted he would be ready to bear the burden of the Presidentship of the Congress.

1. Pyarelal Papers, N M M L. (Original in Hindi)

This question of the Presidentship of the Congress seems to me quite significant. As you know these days the condition of the Congress is peculiar. Any mistake on our part can do much harm to the Congress and there can also be a rift in it. In such a situation when neither Rajendra Babu nor Vallabhbhai would be available I think the Maulana's becoming the President can do much good.

Today I have sent a list of 14 names to the Viceroy.<sup>2</sup> One more name will be sent later.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

2. For the 14 names see *Selectel Works*, Vol 15, p 301.

### 31. To Rajkumari Amrit Kaur<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
12 September 1946

My dear Amrit,

Your letter. I quite agree that it is improper to suggest violent means in our struggle in South Africa. I have said nothing which can even remotely be interpreted to mean this. This is the first time I have heard that some such approach has been made. I doubt very much if it has any importance. I do not see exactly what I am going to contradict. However, if an occasion offers itself, I shall make this point clear.<sup>2</sup>

Yours,  
Jawahar

Some of us—Sardar, Rajendra Babu, Rajaji and I—would like to meet Bapu on Saturday at 7 p.m. if it suits him. Also we would like him to keep Sunday afternoon 2 p.m. onwards free. J.

1. Pyarelal Papers, N M M L.

2. Nehru issued a statement to the press in this connection on 13 September 1946 See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol 1, p 445.

**32. Note on Defence<sup>1</sup>**

There are several important matters which will have to be considered very soon by the full Cabinet. Some of these involve considerations of foreign policy, others concern the future of the Indian army. I suppose all these matters will have to be reviewed at an early date by the various Committees of the Defence Department, the Defence Committee of India and ultimately by the Cabinet, and policies will be laid down for the future. We have been waiting for the arrival of the new Defence Member because obviously it is desirable for all these matters to be considered in his presence. It is unfortunate that there has been some delay already in dealing with them. I suggest that the War Department and the other Departments concerned should prepare themselves with all the necessary papers, notes, etc. for this formal consideration of future policy, so that everything should be ready by the time the Defence Member comes. I take it that he will be here within a week at the most. At the first Cabinet meeting after his arrival these matters can be considered

2 It is obvious that one of our first tasks, as a national Government based on popular approval, is to attempt to transform the whole background of the Indian army and make it feel that it is a national army of India. It was impossible for this to be done in the past because the whole conception of the Indian army was different and the average soldier fought far more in terms of an external allegiance than of allegiance to his own country.

3. The Indian army, as is well known and recognised throughout the world, consists of a very fine body of men of whom any country can be proud. That is a great asset for us and we should preserve this asset and not allow it to deteriorate in any way. It would be a great pity if communal feelings spread in the Indian army because these would inevitably lead to a weakening of the structure as well as a deterioration in morale. Our policy must therefore be aimed at keeping the army away from such communal feelings as far as possible. While we have necessarily to pay attention to fair representation in the army of the different communities in India, it should be made perfectly clear that the ultimate criteria are

1 Note to Defence Secretary, 12 September 1946, and sent to Auchinleck, Commander-in-Chief. Auchinleck Papers, John Rylands University Library, Manchester.

merit and capacity. It is now I think well recognised that we should give up the idea of some people of India belonging to martial races and therefore being particularly suited for the army, and others belonging to non-martial races. This distinction must disappear and we must deal with the whole of India on the same basis

4. I have mentioned above the necessity for making the army feel that it is a national army of India. This means that a deliberate attempt should be made to make them feel so and to make them realise that their service and their allegiance is primarily due to their own country. They must be made to feel proud of their country and to believe in its great future. They must realise that it is their onerous and honourable duty to guard this country from aggression and foreign intrusion so that the country may develop rapidly and take its proper place in the world.

5. While it is therefore necessary to infuse a new nationalist spirit in the ranks of the Indian army, it is equally necessary to make the Indian public feel that the army is theirs and is not some kind of hostile force imposed on them. They should be proud of their army and it should be an honour for any Indian to belong to that army. Fortunately some change has been visible in the attitude of the Indian public generally towards the Indian army. This should be encouraged in every way. Thus the Indian army and the public generally will come closer to each other and the barriers which have divided them in the past will disappear. The army as such of course should remain apart from politics

6. If we are to develop, as we must, a national army in India (and army of course includes here navy and air force) that army must be manned by Indian nationals from top to bottom. A national army has no place for non-nationals except as experts and advisers. Generally speaking this policy has been accepted but the process of change has been remarkably slow. This has to be speeded up and in future where foreign help is necessary this should be as far as possible in the nature of expert and advisory help

7. The army carries out the policy of the Government. During the past that policy has been largely controlled from London. In future the foreign policy of India and of course the domestic policy also will be progressively an independent policy controlled by the Indian national Government. That policy will endeavour to cooperate wherever possible with British policy, but it may not be dictated to by British foreign policy. Its sole aim must be the good of India and of the Indian people and the maintenance of peace in India and abroad.



8. Unfortunately the army has to be used sometimes for quelling domestic disorders. All soldiers hate this kind of work. It is against their self-respect and is bad for the morale of the army. Nevertheless sometimes this becomes an essential duty of the army when disorders cannot be controlled by the police whose normal duty this is. It would be desirable, wherever necessary, to increase the police force or to form special peace preservation corps for this particular purpose so as to relieve the army as far as possible of this distasteful duty.

9. The Indian army has often been used against the tribesmen of the North West Frontier. Only recently the air arm has been used for this purpose in Waziristan.<sup>2</sup> Fortunately human casualties were very few and I am very happy to learn that these operations have ended and some kind of settlement is on the point of being reached. This matter raises broad questions of policy. Bombing of civilians or backward people who have no protection against this form of attack is peculiarly objectionable. For many years past bombing of the Frontier has been bitterly criticised in India and even abroad. There is a strong military case for this form of action as it is rapid, far less expensive and usually does not involve many casualties. Nevertheless it is extraordinarily difficult for public opinion in India or elsewhere to approve of it and it has become an urgent matter to consider this policy as a whole and to revise it. Some other way will have to be found to deal with recalcitrant tribesmen. It is obvious that murder cannot be tolerated nor can kidnapping or ransom. This kind of thing has to be met firmly and put down. At the same time the approach has to be a friendly one. In an attempt to gain the cooperation of the tribes quick results may not be obtained but I have little doubt that the foundation will be laid thereby for future cooperation and this problem of a hundred years old standing will be far nearer solution. However that may be, it must be recognised that bombing of these areas or of any civilians is abhorrent to public opinion and no national government can indulge in it except possibly in cases of extreme crisis and danger.

10. When we talk of a national army in India it naturally follows that the British army in India should no longer remain here for any purpose, including Frontier defence. India must make her own arrangements for her defence and the British army has to leave India as rapidly as possible. This need not wait for the deliberations of the Constituent Assembly. It is recognised by all concerned, including the British Government, that we are all aiming at the independence of India. Indepen-

2 See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol 1, pp. 301-303.

dence with foreign troops on the soil of India would be a travesty and a farce. Therefore all foreign troops have to be withdrawn though a certain number of British officers may remain here by agreement for a period.

11. All questions of defence are today in a fluid state because of rapid developments in the science of warfare. It is quite conceivable that our present methods of warfare may become completely out of date within 10 years or so owing to scientific research. The coming of atomic energy and the possibility of our using cosmic are revolutionizing the whole conception of life as it is lived today and will have the most powerful effects on the whole structure of modern civilization. Those effects will be specially notable in regard to war. It may be that war itself may become an impossible way of handling human problems. However that may be, it is obvious that any effective war machine must have behind it a high stage of industrialization and scientific research both extensive and intensive. No country which is not industrialized can carry on war for long, however good the army might be. No country, which has not got its scientific research in all its forms and of the highest standing, can compete in industry or in war with another. This leads to the conclusion that scientific research must be organized on the broadest scale

12. A very important matter which will have to be considered soon is the employment of Indian troops overseas. I gather that they are spread out at present in the following places: Japan, Hong Kong, Malaya, Siam, Netherlands East Indies, Burma, Borneo, Ceylon, Iraq, Middle East and Italy. It is not obvious to me why Indian troops should do the policeman's job in various countries. It may be that for the moment they may be necessary in the period of transition from war to peace conditions in some places. I think it is highly undesirable for Indian troops to be employed outside the frontiers of India. The fine body of men that comprise the Indian army have been admired abroad but at the same time they have been disliked often enough as representing foreign domination. We seek to dominate no foreign country, we want to be friends with other peoples. It may be that on occasions of crisis we may have to take some abnormal step but the general policy must be one of withdrawal of Indian troops from overseas.

13. In particular this question arises in regard to the Netherlands East Indies and Iraq. In both these cases public opinion has vigorously objected and many months ago it was stated that Indian troops would be withdrawn from the Netherlands East Indies. It is well known that Indian sympathies are with the Indonesian Republic and when the occasion

comes for it this Republic will be formally recognised by the Indian Government. If this is so, then it is an offence against our national policy and public opinion in India to keep any Indian troops in the Netherlands East Indies. I understand they are being withdrawn but apparently this is being done to suit the convenience of the Dutch authorities. Why we should accommodate the Dutch who are playing the role of an aggressor and dominating power in Indonesia, I do not understand. We have no sympathy with the Dutch there and we think that they are wholly in the wrong. We should help them in no way at all. Therefore the withdrawal of Indian troops from the Netherlands East Indies must be expedited. During this brief interval while they are there, it must be made perfectly clear that they are to be used in no way against the people of Indonesia or to the embarrassment of the Indonesian Republic. This should be made perfectly clear both to the Dutch and the Indonesian Republic.

14. In Iraq Indian troops have been recently sent ostensibly to protect the oilfields there which supply oil and petrol to India. It is certainly desirable to protect our oil supplies but it appears to me dangerous policy to give small and inadequate protection, and at the same time to gain the ill will of other countries. Thus Iran, on the borders of Iraq, has protested against our sending troops to Basra. Obviously the presence of Indian troops there may be considered as a continuous provocation in the international field. We are not concerned with the internal politics of Iran or with those of any other country. We are not in a position to police other countries, and we should not get embroiled in international conflicts and manoeuvres. Therefore this business of sending or keeping troops in Iraq for use in Iran should be ended.

15. In this note I have referred to many aspects of our army, army policy and foreign affairs. They touch each other. There are many other matters concerning the Indian army in which the Government is interested and in regard to which it desires changes. But I do not wish to burden this note any further. The immediate questions before us are a change in the whole outlook of the Indian army making it national in reality and more in accord with public sentiment, the withdrawal of the British forces from India, and the withdrawal of Indian troops from abroad, more specially from the Netherlands East Indies and Iraq.

16. All these matters will have to be considered by the Cabinet finally, but before that is done the various other Committees and Departments involved should consider them and be ready with their notes and papers. The Defence Member will, I hope, also give his earnest consideration to these important problems.

### 33. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
4 October 1946

My dear Bapu,

I am sending you a copy of the Viceroy's reply to Jinnah's nine points; also my letter to the Viceroy.<sup>2</sup>

Bhopal has just come to me and asked me if I would go to his place for lunch today presumably to meet Jinnah there. I said I would do so. The matter has not been settled yet.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

<sup>1</sup> Pyarelal Papers, N.M.M.L.

<sup>2</sup> See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol 1, pp 165-167

### 34. To the Nawab of Bhopal<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
10 October 1946

My dear Nawab Sahib,

I was kept very busy yesterday with a number of engagements and could not visit Gandhiji. I do not know exactly what developments took place yesterday. Vaguely I have been told that some new formula is being considered. I do not know yet what this is.

I am also ignorant as to whether the letter<sup>2</sup> I sent you the night before last addressed to Mr. Jinnah has been delivered to him or not. This puts me in a somewhat anomalous position because Mr. Jinnah's letter had to be replied to in any event. In an important matter of this kind delay is not only undesirable but lacking in courtesy. Also in that letter of mine I had stated as precisely as I could what our position was and is. We have arrived at a stage when there should be complete precision so as to avoid misunderstanding.

For my part I do not like the legalistic approach in matters of this kind. I suppose formulae have to be evolved sometimes to express a viewpoint, but if there is no common background behind the formula, argument persists. This does not help in arriving at the real solution which one hopes for and may even create difficulties later on when different interpretations are given.

<sup>1</sup> Pyarelal Papers, N.M.M.L.

<sup>2</sup> See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol 1. pp 174-175

There is one matter which is troubling me and which I should like to make clear to you. The political aspect apart, I am most concerned with what I consider a personal as well as a national question of honour. I do not wish to be a party to anything which is derogatory to my Muslim colleagues in the Congress or elsewhere, nor am I prepared to agree to anything which affects injuriously their association with the Congress. I do hope you will keep this in mind because for me it is a vital matter.

I still think that the proper approach is to avoid these legalistic arguments and, taking things as they are, to join hands for a common purpose. We cannot get rid of the past suddenly, but we can work in such a manner as to allow this past not to affect too much the present and the future.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### 35. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
11.10.46

My dear Bapu,

I enclose copies of correspondence with the Viceroy I think these letters explain themselves <sup>2</sup>

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal

In my telegram<sup>3</sup> to Aung San (which I sent in consultation with my colleagues) I stated that it was our general policy to withdraw Indian troops from abroad but that we would like to have the views of his Government so that any action we might take might not embarrass the Burma Government. Our Defence Member and the C.-in-C. therefore suggested that their views might be communicated to us or preferably that Aung San and the G.O.C. in Burma might come here for consultation.

I am enclosing a copy of the memorandum on the salt tax which the Finance Department has circulated to us and about which I spoke to you this evening <sup>4</sup>

1 Pyarelal Papers, N M M L

2 See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol 1, pp 176-179

3 See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol 1, pp 511-512

4 The memorandum proposed abolition of excise duty on salt but favoured continuation of production of salt by the Government. Ultimately, the Interim Government decided to abolish the salt tax on 15 October 1946

**36. Telegram to Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>**

Patna  
8 November 1946

Situation generally quiet for two days <sup>2</sup> No major incident but tension and apprehension continue. Certain criminal elements including...<sup>3</sup> gang causing trouble in some places. Newspaper reports on military action two days<sup>1</sup> ago greatly exaggerated. Am going Delhi Saturday. Rajendra Babu and Jayaprakash staying on.

Jawaharlal

1. Pyarelal Papers, N.M M.L.
2. On the communal riots in Bihar see *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol 1, pp 70-86.
- 3 Not clear in the source

**37. Telegram to Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
1 January 1947

Visited Patna met minister and relief commissioners. Arrangements for relief rehabilitation appear satisfactory. No communal incidents for many weeks. All agree reports sent to you grossly exaggerated and containing unfounded allegations Enquiry welcome. Good wishes for New Year

Jawaharlal

- 1 Pyarelal Papers, N.M M L

**38. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi  
18.1.47

My dear Bapu.

I have just returned from Patna <sup>2</sup> A letter from Shuaib was waiting for me here enclosing a cover for you This is being sent to you—presumably it contains a letter from the Nawab of Bhopal.

1. Pyarelal Papers, N.M M L
- 2 Nehru had visited Patna to receive the honorary degree of Doctor of Science at the convocation held on 17 January 1947

At Patna I had a brief talk with Sri Babu and the Chief Secretary about conditions in Bihar. There have been no incidents worth reporting but the exodus of Muslims has continued—many from areas which had not been affected by the disturbances. It was estimated that about 75000 had gone to Bengal. Some people are still going while some are coming back. Obviously this kind of thing must have some organised effort behind it but no one knows what this is. Indeed it is being done rather quietly, even somewhat secretly. The Bihar Government gets no information and they have no satisfactory method of getting it. The Government is far too passive about it all. They work slowly. They are worried naturally but have no conception of what should be done. I am sure Badshah Khan's visit is doing good.<sup>3</sup> I did not meet him there but I shall see him at the Constituent Assembly soon.

It is said that some anonymous notices asking Muslims to quit were distributed in some places—presumably by Hindus. There is a sense of fear and apprehension among the Muslims.

We are following your tour and watching its results from a distance. We all wonder when you will come this way again. You are wanted in so many places.

I hope you are looking after yourself.

Love,

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

- 3 Abdul Ghaffar Khan arrived in Patna on 10 January 1947 to undertake a village-to-village tour in the riot-affected districts of Bihar on the pattern of Mahatma Gandhi's walking tour.

### 39. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
9 February 1947

Dear Bapu,

I have received your letter of the 3rd February regarding the Malaviyaji Memorial Fund. At Radhakrishnan's instance a number of people gathered together here and they started a committee and a fund. They made me chairman much against my will as I do not like assuming any responsibility for this kind of work.

I remember, of course, that nothing of this kind has yet been done about

<sup>1</sup> Pyarelal Papers, N M M L

Hakim Saheb, my father and Ansari. It is not for me to move in this matter and I suppose it is rather late now to take any step.

In the circumstances here I found it difficult to refuse and there I am, rather a formal chairman. No target has been fixed, but people are thinking in big terms running into several crores. They expect quite a number of substantial donations of a lakh or over. The object is principally to expand the activities of the Benares Hindu University. The money may be used for other purposes also as the committee decides.

The League resolution was about as bad as it could be.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps there was a virtue in it for it makes the position quite clear. After this resolution it is even more difficult than before for us to carry on in the old way in the Interim Government. We are moving in the matter.

Meanwhile we are having talks with the Rulers. Their approach too as a whole is bad.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

- 2 In a resolution passed at Karachi on 31 January 1947, the Muslim League Working Committee blamed the Congress Party for exceeding "the limitations imposed by the statement of May 16th on the Constituent Assembly's functions and powers" and demanded that the Constituent Assembly "should be forthwith dissolved."

#### 40. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
21 February 1947

Dear Bapuji,

I have your letter of the 15th February enclosing a letter from Khurshed Naoroji.

There is a great deal of talk in the papers about sending a medical mission to help Vietnam. Nobody, however, seems to be taking any effective step in that direction. Sarat Bose wrote to me asking for permission for a medical mission to be sent as well as for armed volunteers.<sup>2</sup> I told him that we could not give facilities for armed volunteers to be sent as this meant practically declaring war on France. Apart from this, we couldn't possibly give transport facilities.

1. Pyarelal Papers, N M M L

2. For Nehru's reply to Sarat Bose see *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 2, pp. 528-529.



In regard to the medical mission we promised to try our best to give the facilities and asked for particulars as to who was being sent. No answer has come.

Obviously we cannot deal with individuals who want to go there. There is no regular service to Indo-China from India and the extraordinary French services are hardly likely to cooperate. If, however, some responsible group sponsors a medical mission we would try to help in every way. Khurshed can join that mission. There is no question, as you say, of any recommendation being required for her unless the organisers of the group require it. There will be no difficulty at our end apart from normal transport difficulties which are considerable.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

#### 41. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
23 4 47

Dear Bapu,

I have your note about the Jallianwala Bagh accounts.<sup>2</sup> I have spoken to Sardar. There will be no difficulty about arranging for the signing of cheques. But we do not know who the trustees are. I suggested that Mukerji, the Secretary of the Jallianwala Fund, might come here with the papers when the Working Committee meets and then we can fix this up. I am having a letter sent to him.

You know that the Congress Working Committee is meeting here on the 1st May. I should very much like you to be here about that time. The first week of May is likely to see the formulation of Mountbatten's scheme for the future.<sup>3</sup> This is obviously important and will shape our future. His intention is to have a rough framework ready by then—to discuss this in detail and then finalise it after reference to the British Government. He expects to get through all these processes by the 3rd week of May. According to this programme, the first week of May will be of considerable importance and all of us would like you to be near us for advice and guidance. I hope therefore that you will be able to come here.

1. Pyarelal Papers, N M M L.

2. In his letter of 18 April 1947, Mahatma Gandhi asked Nehru to consult Patel and let him know as to who would sign the cheques concerning the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Trust after the death of Madan Mohan Malaviya.

3. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol 2, pp 128-137.

then You need not come on the 1st or even 2nd, though if you can do so it will be preferable. But I do hope you can be here by the 3rd at the latest.

Kripalani is not here and has gone to Jaipur. I am sure he would like you to be here at the time of the Working Committee. I spoke to Vallabhbhai and he agreed with me that you should come.

I hope you are keeping well.

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

## 42. To Julian S. Huxley<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
14th May, 1947

Dear Dr. Huxley,<sup>2</sup>

I must apologise to you for the delay in answering your letter of the 26th March.<sup>3</sup> I am attracted by your project and I would gladly associate myself with it. But when you ask me to write something on the subject of human rights, I feel a little diffident. There is no point in my writing unless I can say something worth while which has not been said by others. Just to write some pious sentiments will serve little purpose.

Apart from this, we have to face at present very difficult and intricate problems in India and I have the misfortune to be tied up with these problems. I cannot find the time for any quiet consideration or writing. You will therefore forgive me I hope if I do not send you a contribution.

I might inform you that our Constituent Assembly has recently been considering the question of fundamental rights to be incorporated in our constitution.

You mention in your letter that you were enclosing a letter to Mahatma Gandhi. No such letter reached me. Mr. Gandhi is not easy to reach always as he has been working in rather distant parts of India and as always

1. Pyarelal Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. Julian Sorell Huxley (1887-1975), biologist and Fellow of the Royal Society; Executive Secretary, UNESCO, Preparatory Commission, 1946; Director-General, UNESCO, 1946-48; author of several books including *Man in the Modern World* (1947) and *Soviet Genetics and World Science* (1949).

3. Huxley wrote that the Commission on Human Rights of the U.N. wanted to issue a declaration on the rights of man for the entire world and requested Nehru to send his contribution.

he is frightfully busy. He is going to come here in about ten days time and I shall then mention this matter to him. Certainly I shall urge him to write something, for his approach to these problems is always novel and interesting. Whether he finds time to do so or not, I cannot say.

I am glad to learn from your letter of the 3rd April that you were trying to get the U.S.S.R. to join the U.N.E.S.C.O. I hope you will succeed. I am quite sure that it is desirable for the U.S.S.R. to be associated with the U.N.E.S.C.O.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

#### 43. To Mahatma Gandhi<sup>1</sup>

New Delhi  
19.5.47

Dear Bapu,

I am so sorry you cannot come to Mussoorie. I am leaving tomorrow morning and expect to return on Sunday 25th night or at the latest on Monday 26th morning. I have to be here on Monday anyhow.

I hope you will be able to reach here on Monday. If not then on Tuesday morning.

I enclose some papers received from Dr Julian Huxley of the U.N.E.S.C.O. He mentions a letter for you but he did not actually send it. But the other papers will make it clear what he wants from you<sup>2</sup>

Yours,  
Jawaharlal

I enclose a copy of a letter received from Rangoon asking for a message from you for the Burmese Constituent Assembly.

<sup>1</sup> Pyarelal Papers, N M M L

<sup>2</sup> Mahatma Gandhi's message to Julian Huxley printed in the United Nations *Weekly Bulletin* of 17 October 1947 read "I learned from my illiterate, but wise, mother that all rights to be deserved and preserved came from a duty well done

The very right to live accrues to us only when we do the duty of the citizenship of the world. From this one fundamental statement perhaps it is easy enough to define the duties of man and woman and correlate every right to some corresponding duty to be first performed. Every other right can be shown to be usurpation hardly worth fighting for"

## GLOSSARY

Chawl	a long, narrow building occupied by a large number of tenants
Hathayoga	a kind of yoga in which the body is subjected to hardships
Jai Hind	victory to India
Karandhar	a leader
Mauni amavasya mela	a fair held on the last day of the first half of Magh, the eleventh month of the Hindu lunar calender (January-February)
Panda	a Hindu priest in a place of pilgrimage

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